

THE
MOURTRAY
FAMILY.

A Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.



VOL. II.



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1800.

THE

FAMILY

MOURNERS

M. O. R. R.

MOURNERS

FAMILY

A. L. R.

IN YOUR VEST

THEY ARE THE ONLY
ONE'S THAT ARE
RECEIVED BY THE
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His wife, who had really believed him
indisposed, when he appeared pale and
trembling by her bedside saying not to
Vol. III

THE
FAMILY
OF
MOURTRAY.

CHAP. I.

HAD Emma been at liberty to follow her own inclinations, instead of attending her mother to the play in the evening, she would have gone to the Duchefs, longing, most impatiently, to deposit her little treasure in her hands; but this being impossible, she resolved to go to her the following morning: she was, however, disappointed, for it rained hard, and Mrs. Mourtray could not spare her carriage.

VOL. II.

B

It

It was not, therefore, till the third morning after her first visit to the emigrants, that she had it in her power to make them a second. As soon as she appeared, not only the Duchesse, but her daughter-in-law, whom she called Sidonie, flew to meet her, overwhelming her with caresses, and the warmest expressions of gratitude.

Emma, by no means comprehending the cause of these very extraordinary effusions, too excessive for her former small donation, stood fixed with amazement ; which increased as she surveyed the alterations that had been effected in the rooms.

No straw mattress was spread upon the floor ; the shabby bed had been exchanged for a very good one ; and, through an open door, two others, very neat, appeared in an adjoining room. A sofa, and many useful articles of furniture, as well

well as several new dresses piled upon a chair, convinced her that some person, as considerate as diligent, had thus supplied the wants of her emigrant friends.

She heard, with infinite astonishment, all the merit of this beneficence ascribed to herself; and though she disclaimed it, with the strongest asseverations of ignorance, still she could not gain belief.

“Who but yourself, Mademoiselle,” said the Duchess, “who so kindly sought out our wretched abode, could give us these things, strangers as we are here? Besides, too, the man who brought them positively affirmed he came by your orders.”

“What man? I protest”

“Nay, nay, *ma bille Demoiselle*, do not attempt to deceive me, having before experienced your goodness. I must

still believe you to be our benefactress."

"Pray, Madam," said Emma, "be so good to describe this man who pretended I sent him."

"A short thick man..."

"With large staring eyes?" eagerly asked Emma, who began to suspect it might be Chowles.

"No, very small ones, sunk deep in his head."

"Well, then, I am quite at a loss to guess the person."—But suddenly recollecting that Lord Miramont had, at parting, asked where the Duchesse lived, she exclaimed—"O yes; I do believe I know whence these things come."

Then

Then making further inquiries, she learned that, late in the preceding evening, this thick short personage arrived, and, having desired to speak with the Duchess, said, in French, that Mademoiselle Mourtray had sent him with the things, which she had ordered and paid for in the name of Madame la Duchesse; that, wondering what this could mean, and apprehensive of some trick, she had refused admittance to the contents of a cart that actually was standing at the door: but that the man either being, or pretending to be, deaf, she never could make him hear her. So that, in a short time, without further ceremony, he and two men he had brought to assist him (who could only speak English), took down the old bed, put up the new ones, and, removing all the old broken furniture, replaced these articles with what she now saw.

“ All this was done *comme par un coup de baquette*,” said the Duchefs; “ and, though very agreeable, strangely perplexed us all. Every thing being arranged to our deaf friend’s satisfaction, he made us a very low bow, desiring to know our commands to Mademoiselle de Mourtray, whom, he said, he should wait upon the next morning. Of course, we charged him with a million of thanks, and have waited with the utmost impatience to make them in person.”

Emma had now no doubt that it was Lord Miramont who had thus acted in her name; and she saw so much delicacy in this proceeding, that her bosom glowed with tenderness towards him.

But unwilling that the Duchefs should continue under a mistake, she told her, that her own small fortune rendered her power of serving others very limited; but that she had been entrusted by a friend,

She then delivered the bank-note folded in a sheet of paper, in the form of a letter sealed ; which the Ducheſs, who ſeemed more and more amazed, with difficulty would take, but under the condition of knowing the name of the writer: this Emma declined telling, though ſhe declared, upon her honour, it was not herſelf ; and, at laſt, ſhe conquered her ſcruples.

Presently afterwards she took her leave;
and, as she was caressing one of the
B 4 chil-

children, she slipped into its hand what she had collected from her mother and Sydney; and then promising that she would call soon again, she departed.

No longer now could Emma disguise from herself the passion that filled her heart; nor did she attempt to conquer it, though well aware that many cogent reasons forbade her indulging it. That so young a man as Lord Miramont, constantly whirled into a vortex of dissipation, should be capable of so much delicacy in dispensing his gifts,—of so much thought and consideration in bestowing them, so as to be the most useful,—appeared to her so charming a trait in his character, that she almost persuaded herself, strong as appearances were against him, he could not, in fact, have any improper attachment.

To see and thank him for this last benevolent action, which pleased her a
thou-

thousand times more than the bank-note, was her most ardent wish; but this was not gratified till the following Saturday; when, being with her mother at the opera, she met him, after it was over, in the small room above.

Her cheeks glowed with joy:—"O, Lord Miramont," cried she, "how kind, how nobly, you have behaved to the poor emigrants! A million of thanks for your goodness!"

"Softly," cried he, smiling; "no thanks are necessary, though it is highly gratifying to me to have pleased you; but say no more on the subject."

"I beg your Lordship's pardon; I cannot pass it over so slightly. But why would you give me the credit of your generosity?"

"What do you mean, Miss Mourtray?" said he, looking surprized.

"I need not explain," answered she, "what you know perfectly well."

"I do not, indeed!"

"Nay, now you carry reserve too far: you must be sensible, Lord Miramont, your conduct could not remain a mystery to me; for could you suppose I would receive thanks to which I have no title? However, as you wished to do good incognito, I did not disclose your name."

"May I perish, Miss Mourtray, if I understand one syllable of what you allude to."

"I admire your delicacy, Lord Miramont, in your conduct towards the emigrants; but, as I know every particular,
you

you must excuse me if I disbelieve your assertion."

"By all that's sacred I know not what you mean! Do, pray, explain yourself?"

"Is it possible," thought Emma to herself, "that I have been mistaken?" But rejecting so unpleasant a doubt, she said—"Can you, Lord Miramont, affirm, upon your honour, that you did not, in my name, send the Duchess's beds, and all sorts of things, the day after you gave me the note for her?"

"I can affirm, ay, and swear too, that I never in my life sent her any thing.—Now I hope you are convinced."

Emma saw too clearly, by his serious air, that he told truth; and her mortification now was as great as her satisfaction had been before. She then related all

the circumstances to him of this mysterious transaction, and both agreed that Lady Wilmington must have been the person in question; yet it seemed to them very unlike her, to dispense favours under a borrowed name; however, even this appeared more probable than that it could be Chowles.

The pleasure Lord Miramont expressed at the improvement of the emigrants' situation, somewhat consoled Emma for her disappointment in finding he had no hand in it; and now, merely from curiosity, she wished to know the truth; but she was a good deal embarrassed how to get at it, not daring to interrogate Lady Wilmington on the subject; who, after all, perhaps, knew nothing of the matter.

Her doubts, in this respect, were soon terminated; for, two days after her conversation with the Marquis, when she
called

called in Grosvenor Square, she found Lady Wilmington and her daughters going to an auction; she was, therefore, retiring, but the former invited her to be of the party, saying, "I must have a little talk with you by the way relative to the French family."

As soon as they were seated in the carriage, Lady Wilmington said—"I hope, Miss Mourtray, you have not given those people reason to expect a visit from me?"

"No, Madam."

"I am glad of it," continued the Countess; "because, upon talking over the matter with Lord Wilmington, he has dissuaded me from it; for, he says, connected as he is with them, they would naturally expect a great deal more than we ought in prudence to do for them, considering we have children of our own."

How-

However, something shall be done, though not just now."

Emma made no answer to these prudent resolutions, but could not help smiling, in her own thoughts, that she had even for an instant supposed it possible that Lady Wilmington had been so liberal. Thinking, however, that she deserved some little mortification, she told her, that her kind purpose had been anticipated by some benevolent person who chose to remain unknown, but whom she suspected to be the rich merchant, Mr. Chowles.

Lady Wilmington, with a face like scarlet, exclaimed—"Mr. Chowles! my God! what an humiliation for the Duchess to receive favours from such a low person! I wonder she would accept of them!"

"Her

“ Her scruples, Madam, probably yielded to the urgency of her distress; and the person who amply provided for her wants, whatever his rank might be, she thought entitled to her gratitude.”

Lady Wilmington frowned in silence. —When they arrived at the auction, they found the room much crowded; she had been there previous to the sale; and, as her only object was to purchase a remarkably elegant dessert service of French china, which she knew would not be put up till one of the last of the articles in the catalogue, she had purposely arrived late.

She had such a majestic imposing air, that, although in mixed company little respect is paid to rank, many were disposed to make way for her; but, where she found any resistance, she pushed on with such imperative motions and looks of astonishment, as if she had a right to
some

some particular distinction, which they were in the wrong to dispute.

Having at length seated herself and party, she waited patiently while the auctioneer finished disposing of the articles she did not want; observing, with much satisfaction, that the room thinned so fast, that not many bidders would be left to oppose her.

The wished-for moment was now arrived. Mr. Voluble, the auctioneer, had already pronounced a panegyric on the dessert service; it was put up, and a sum much inferior to its value bid for it. The complaisant Mr. Voluble, well acquainted with the Countess, as the price rose, consulted her significant nods, till nobody seeming inclined to bid more, her last nod, she flattered herself, had decided in her favour; he himself, smirking more agreeably than ever, seemed to say by his looks, "you are sure of it;" and his suspended

pended hammer was on the point of falling, when suddenly a loud rough voice bid a larger sum ; and bustling forward, with his wig pushed awry, and in a profuse perspiration, appeared Chowles.

Lady Wilmington turned pale ; and, in a voice scarcely articulate, hastened to outbid him ; Chowles seemed to hesitate ; but the sight of him had so marvellous an effect on Mr. Voluble, that a torrent of eloquence burst from his lips : waving his hammer, and turning his eyes alternately on Lady Wilmington and Chowles, he repeated with energy—"This very beautiful service of *Seve porcelaine*, *unique* in its design, elegant, beyond all others, in the truly graceful form of its dishes, *corbeilles*, *compotiers* ; originally made for the King of France ; never used, its enamel perfect and entire :—this superb and exceeding magnificent service, in all its virgin purity, I say, is going—going for fifty guineas.

" Fifty

"Fifty-five," hastily cried out Chowles. The Countess, by an angry nod, made another effort to secure it, but it would not do; Chowles bid so bold and rapidly, that, though bursting with rage, she was forced to give up the contest.

Chowles, whose audacity equalled his rage for fine things, and who delighted, as he said, in outbidding the quality, seeing Lady Wilmington, with her eyes flashing fire, and her cheeks burning, stalking majestically towards the door, hastened forwards to make a sort of ironical apology for bidding against a Lady; though he must own, he said, he was proud to find such a conformity between his taste and her Ladyship's; "and you know, my Lady," continued he, "that, in some cases, one must wave ceremony."

"It is your invariable practice, Sir," said she, bridling, "to wave it on all occasions."

"Umph!"

"Umph! umph! I am sorry your Ladyship has taken offence," cried Chowles, "but I don't see why; I am a plain man, 'tis true; but if I can afford to buy fine things, why not have them? One man's money is as good as another's."

During this speech, Lady Wilmington was pinning a black hood close under her chin; wishing to have the appearance of guarding her ears more from his voice than from the cold.

"The old Lady," whispered he to Emma, "is in a fine stew; but if my pretty nut-brown's mouth waters after this service, egad she shall have it."

"If you mean me, Sir, I have no sort of wish for, and certainly would not accept, your china."

"Well, well," cried he, "there's a time for all things; a time for taking, and

and a time for refusing. I hope, some of these days, to have you in another guess fort of a mood."

"If you have any business, Miss Mourtray," said Lady Wilmington, "with Mr. *Jowles*"

"Chowles, my Lady; my name an't *Jowles*," cried he: but, not heeding this interruption, she continued—"I say, you had better appoint some place more convenient for its discussion, and not keep me waiting."

Emma mildly said, she should be very sorry to do so, but thought her Ladyship was waiting for her servants.

The moment Lady Wilmington and her party were seated in her carriage, her indignation had its free course:—"Upon my word," cried she, "these are fine levelling times! Formerly citizens minded their
their

their business, kept in their proper sphere on the other side of Temple Bar, and clean pewter was all they pretended to. But now all distinctions are lost; they presume to put themselves on a footing with people of fashion, and they must have French china truly!"

"Mr. Chowles, Madam," said Emma, "is a very great merchant, and immensely rich."

"Well, what is that to the purpose? Let him keep in his proper place; he may be respectable there; but he has no business to be elbowing his superiors here. My laundry maid, I am told, is a mighty good sort of a body; but she would appear somewhat out of character,—the same as your Mr. *Jowles* does,—if she were to stand at the wash-tub in a turban and feathers. However, this, or or any other absurdity that can happen, will no longer surprise me."

The

The young Ladies smiled, but none of them ventured to speak. Emma could not help thinking, during the auction, whilst Lady Wilmington was bidding so eagerly against Chowles, that it was surprising she should not feel ashamed to squander her money thus in superfluities, when she had so recently pleaded her poverty as an excuse, for refusing to assist in procuring common necessaries for persons whom she affected to pity.—“ Ah !” said she to herself, “ when caprice or vanity demand gratifications, how open are some purses, and how closely shut to the calls of humanity.”

As averse as ever from thinking Chowles had been the benefactor of the emigrants, she determined, when she should see him at the opera concert, to which she was to go in the evening, with her mother, and Mrs. Prouting, to make him explain this mystery.

Just

Just as Lady Wilmington set her down in Wimpole Street, Sydney at the same instant arrived at the door, and followed her into the house. Mrs. Mourtray was dressing; and, Emma not choosing to have a tête-à-tête, she was on the point of saying she must attend to her toilet, when suddenly it occurred to her, that he would be pleased to hear that the persons, for whom he had shewn much interest when he heard her relate the story to Chowles, were in great measure relieved from their distress; at least for the present.

She, therefore, briefly told him all that had happened; but when she mentioned her astonishment at the conduct of her pretended agent, and that all her endeavours had been ineffectual to discover his employer, she perceived, with amazement, that Sydney became extremely red, and fixed his eyes on the ground.

“ Good

“ Good Heaven !” exclaimed she, “ is it possible ? Surely, Mr. Sydney, it cannot be you who have done all this !”

He made no answer, but his embarrassment seemed to increase.

“ Pray, speak ; relieve my doubts ; do, I intreat you.”

What shall I say, Miss Mourtray ? How apologise for the liberty I took in using your name on this occasion ? But, in what other way could I presume to be of some little use to persons, to whom my name was unknown ; whom, even in relieving, it was requisite to treat with the most cautious delicacy ; and how could this be so well done, as by persuading them it was not by a stranger, but by you ?”

“ Ah ! Mr. Sydney,” cried Emma, infinitely delighted, “ how I envy you the
plea-

sure you must have felt on this occasion ! Many persons do good ; but few are those who thus delicately attend to the feelings of the unfortunate."

" You forgive me, then."

" Forgive you ! Is it possible you can have offended ? Be assured I am more obliged to you than I can express. You cannot imagine, however, how much I have been puzzled to developé this affair, and all the mistakes it has occasioned."

" I never intended to mention it, but I could not resist your commands ; still, however, I intreat that it may remain a secret between ourselves : indeed it is not worth mentioning ; would to Heaven I could have done more !—But that I may no longer detain you, Madam, I will take my leave."—So saying, he departed.

Emma stood musing instead of going to dress :—" So modest, so refined in his sentiments," said she, " with such a feeling heart ! Ah ! Lord Miramont, you are generous, but have you this delicacy ? How perfect would you be with your figure, talents, and vivacity, if you resembled Sydney in character !"

CHAP. II.

EMMA, having no occasion to question Chowles, hardly spoke to him at the concert ; where, as usual with him, he annoyed her with his assiduities. Both Lord Miramont and Sydney were there ; but the former did not approach her till she was waiting with her party to depart. Just as he began to speak to her, he was interrupted by Lady Fredville ; who, coming up to him, laid her hand on his arm, saying—"Do, Lord Miramont, go, and ask for my servants : I am suffocated in this crowd."

He instantly obeyed, but soon returned ; saying, it was impossible she could get away for some time, as there was a riot at the door, and one carriage blocked up the way, so that no others could move.

Lady Fredville, after lamenting that she had not come in her chair, was forced to submit to delay ; and, to amuse herself, she stood holding to her eye a small glass, suspended by a gold chain to her neck :—" Very pretty, indeed !" said she, quite loud, looking towards Emma :—" who is she ? I think, however, you once told me her name."

" Then I wonder you should forget it," said he, in a half-whisper : " It is Miss Mourtray."

" She is not much in the world, I fancy : I don't remember to have seen her any where but at the opera."

" Perhaps not ; but she is often with my aunt."

" Oh ! I suppose she is some ——shire girl ; and Lady Wilmington thinks, therefore, she must be civil to her."

" Upon

“ Upon my word, I believe, she inspires all those who know her with the wish of being so ; for she is extremely amiable.”

“ She is, then, a favourite of your’s ?” said Lady Fredville, affecting to smile.

“ Pray, talk lower,” said he ; “ or change your subject ;” observing Emma’s face covered with blushes : and then he added something else she could not hear, but which excited her curiosity not a little.

Whatever unconcern Lady Fredville had affected, in her manner of questioning the Marquis, Emma yet fancied she eyed her with something like jealousy ; and she dwelt with delight on the few words in her praise that had fallen from his lips. Though far from insensible to admiration, she was better pleased that he should think her modest and

amiable, than if he had more warmly commended her person.

Full of these ideas, she was so absent, that when Sydney, who had but just made his way to her, began addressing her, she answered as if she did not understand what he was saying.

Struck with this alteration in her manners, since the morning, and too much pained by it not to be anxious to discover the cause, he followed the direction of her eyes, and, with a severe pang, observed, that, however they might accidentally be attracted, they were sure to rest on Lord Miramont.

At the ball given by Chowles, he had remarked how animated she seemed, when dancing with or sitting by this formidable rival; for such he conceived him to be, notwithstanding his ostensible attachment to another.. To draw her out
out

out of her reverie, he ventured to ask, looking at Lord Miramont, who had now moved to some distance, and stood leaning against the wall, if she did not think his figure very fine ?

Emma started ; but instantly recovering herself, answered, concisely, “ I believe it is reckoned so.”

“ You meet him often, I presume, Madam, at Lady Wilmington’s ?”

“ Sometimes :—but pray, Mr. Sydney, how did you like the concert ?”

“ Extremely.. I have been told Lord Miramont sings remarkably well : are you of this opinion, Miss Mourtray ?”

“ I am no judge :—I wonder whether my brother has enquired after our carriage ;” and, turning to her mother, she asked if she did not wish to go home.

Mrs. Mourtray expressed no such wish : she was talking very fast with several of her acquaintance, and, in answer to her daughter, only exclaimed—" Lord, no ; it is quite early yet."

And Mrs. Prouting said, she should expire with fright, if she stirred before the confusion at the door was quite over.

Much about the time that Lady Fredville's carriage was announced to be ready, Mrs. Mourtray consented to depart ; but Henry not appearing, having other things to mind than a mother and sister, and Mrs. Prouting having seized her husband's arm, Mrs. Mourtray, who was very helpless on all occasions, was extremely glad to put herself under Sydney's care, who, however, offered his other arm to Emma ; but the crowd not suffering them to pass three a-breast, she was forced to relinquish her hold, and get on as well as she could.

Sydney,

Sydney, full of alarm, kept looking back every instant to see that she was safe, bidding her keep close, which she managed to do, till Mrs. Mourtray, stumbling and losing her shoe, Emma, whilst he was stooping and assisting her, was whirled away by a body of riotous footmen, so far as to lose all sight of her party.—Frightened, confused, and jostled about, with flambeaux close to her face; stunned with oaths, and forced to move forward, she wished most ardently to see any creature she knew, that she might cling to him for protection; when, at that instant, almost close to her, she perceived the Marquis, with Lady Fredville leaning on his arm, whilst her husband was clearing the way before them.

Almost involuntarily, Emma exclaimed,
 “Oh! Lord Miramont, assist me!”

“Good God! Miss Mourtray!”—cried he, disengaging his arm from Lady Fred-
 ville

ville's hold, "in the name of God, how came you here alone?"

Without waiting for an answer, and leaving Lady Fredville to the care of her Lord, he seized Emma's hand, and soon got her from amid the throng; and she was making him a thousand acknowledgments, when Sydney, all at once, running up to them, looking half frantic, "Thank Heaven! thank God! I have found you!" cried he; "poor Mrs. Mourtray is almost in fits with terror."

"Where, where?" cried Emma.

"Take hold of my arm," said he; "come along; I will see you safe."

Lord Miramont then resigned her to Sydney's care, who hurried her up the Haymarket, and assisted her into the carriage, where Mrs. Mourtray and her party were already placed.—Much as Emma had been alarmed, she would have
thought

thought this one of the happiest moments of her life; if Sydney had not arrived so *mal-à-propos*, and been so officious in releasing her from Lord Miramont's care, who, for *her* sake, had left Lady Fredville !

Poor Sydney, therefore, received very cold thanks for his trouble, when he bade her adieu ; and he could not help thinking himself singularly unfortunate, that he, who had so early felt her merit, who lived only to adore her, should see no chance of ever making any favourable impression upon her, whilst the object of her preference, though undoubtedly superior to him in some respects, could, at least, only offer her a divided heart. He persuaded himself he should be less wretched if this preference regarded any other man than Lord Miramont ; for it seemed to him inconsistent with the purity of Emma's principles, to be prepossessed in favour, if not of a libertine, certainly (to use the

mildest term) of a man of very relaxed morals.

Yet, in despite of these reflections, Sydney had no inclination to break his fetters :—far from it ; but he resolved, in silence, humbly to adore, and watch, like a guardian angel, over his beloved Emma.

Mrs. Mourtray was no sooner relieved from her terrible apprehensions concerning her daughter, than she began enquiring what had occasioned her staying so long behind, and lamenting that good Mr. Chowles had been obliged, from indisposition, to retire early, otherwise all these disasters, she said, would not have happened.

Emma could give no other account of herself, than that she had been separated from her by the crowd ; adding, she believed, she should have sunk with terror,
had

had she not most fortunately met with Lord Miramont."

"Why, it was Mr. Sydney that put you into the coach," said Mrs. Mourtray.

"True, Madam; but he did not find me till Lord Miramont had extricated me from my difficulties."—And then, pleading fatigue, she remained silent, with his image hovering in her fancy. The trifling service she had received from him, though no more than what any other gentleman would have done, she chose to magnify; because her eye, in fact, was fascinated by his air of fashion and figure; and, imperceptibly, notions of vanity and ambition were gaining ground in her mind, where, probably, the latter at least never would have had access, had she remained unknown to the Wilmington family.

The following Sunday, Emma received a note from Lady Bell in a style of affection,
she

she had never used since she had ventured to blame her for encouraging Darnford's attentions unknown to her parents. —She concluded her note with these lines :—

“ Mamma and sister spend this day in the country. Papa chose I should stay with him ; and I am condemned to bear the weight of *Madame du Plomb's* company, unless you take pity on me. Indeed, it would be real charity if you and Mrs. Mourtray would call after church, and take me with you to Kensington gardens. A certain person, who shall be nameless, is now engaged on Tower duty.—Last night I won two guineas and a half at commerce, which I destine for your poor emigrants.

“ Adieu ! I depend upon your compliance, my sweet Emma, with the wish of

“ Your very faithful and affectionate

“ ISABELLA FONTELIEU.”

Emma,

Emma, though no longer blind to her friend's faults, still loved her enough to rejoice in this renewal of kindness; and, much pleased at her remembrance of the emigrants, she hastened, with her mother's approbation, to assure her they would call for her.

To the gardens, therefore, they went: the beauty of the day brought all the world there, from all parts of the town; and though, amid such a concourse of people, there were many beautiful women, none appeared more lovely than Emma and Lady Bell. The latter, however, attracted the most attention, not from her superior beauty, but on account of her singular style of dress, which induced numbers to stop and gaze at her: whilst a set of forward young men, admiring both, followed their steps, and, by the freedom of their remarks, abashed Emma far more than they gratified her vanity by their commendations. Though
not

not exempt from failings, her native modesty and delicacy remained unimpaired.

Whilst her eyes were cast downwards, and her cheeks suffused in blushes, Lady Bell, with unaltered countenance, returned stare for stare, and without the least discomposure, listened to the most hyperbolic flattery. Both she and Mrs. Mourtray were delighted with the crowd that followed them; the latter, because her maternal pride exulted in observing the effects of her daughter's charms.

They had now been up and down the fashionable walk, when they met Darnford. Emma, disagreeably surprized, cast a reproachful look at Lady Bell, who only laughed, and said to him, "Do you know, I made Emma believe that you were at the Tower?"

"Why so, Madam?"

"O!

“ O! I can’t tell you now.—But why did you come so late?”

He made her an answer, in a low voice, and they continued conversing together, unmindful of their party. Two Ladies of Mrs. Mourtray’s acquaintance joining her, she walked between them; and, before her, the young Ladies and Darnford.

But Lady Bell now wishing less for public observation, and desirous of avoiding some of her mother’s friends, proposed keeping along the gravel walk, by the side of the Park, which was quite deserted, in comparison of that where all the fine world were assembled; and Emma’s presence being a little restraint on her private conversation with Darnford, she diverted herself, occasionally, with ridiculing all the odd figures she saw. It was in vain that Emma tried to check her; for Darnford, encouraging her by laughing,

ing, she continued her criticisms aloud, without the least reserve.

Amongst other strange figures, she had noticed, once or twice, a tall raw-boned man, with a very tight old-fashioned stock, which, with a coat extremely low in the collar, and falling off his shoulders, discovered, to full view, his long scraggy neck.

“For Heaven’s sake!” cried Lady Bell, “look at that figure before us!—Now really that is a *quix*, beyond permission!”

“Pray,” said the man, turning fiercely round, and standing still; “pray, who has licensed *you* to decide what is, or what is not permitted?”

Lady Bell, thunderstruck at this unexpected address, pulling Emma along, darted on the turf to get out of his way.

But

But he was equally nimble; and, extending his arms to prevent her passing, "Not so fast," said he: "hitherto you have amused yourself with laughing at others *beyond permission*, (mimicking her), and now I think it very fair to have my turn with you."

Darnford, with a furious oath, and giving him a rough push, bid him go along, and not presume to obstruct the Lady.

"So, Mr. Redcoat, you mean, do you, to act the part of champion?" said the man; "but my business is not with you: it is with this gaudy thing, without a waist, or scarcely a petticoat; with protuberances, swelled by pride"

Here Darnford interrupted his harangue, by trying to seize him by the collar; but the man, being much the strongest, he not only prevented his purpose, by a sudden

sudden jerk of his arm, but, while Darnford was pursuing him, as he was making towards the *ha-ha*! the man, after swinging him round, tumbled him into it; and then, with extraordinary agility, made his escape over it into the Park.

The young Ladies, during this transaction, which was over in an instant, made the best use they could of their legs; but the elderly Ladies, not being able to keep up with them, soon slackened their pace when the cause of their alarm ceased, much wondering what had occasioned this odd scuffle; and Darnford having scrambled out of the ditch, they all proceeded in search of the young Ladies.

These had taken refuge in one of the covered seats, which, fortunately, they found empty; and neither, for some instants, could speak, from terror and want of breath: but Lady Bell, now believing herself safe, gave a loose to anger:—
 “ Such

“ Such a monstrous outrage,” she said,
 “ she believed was without example!—
 Such a brute!—such a wretch, as that
 man with the scragged neck, never
 existed !”

Emma patiently heard her ; firmly,
 however, resolving, that no consideration,
 not even the sanction of her mother’s pre-
 sence, should induce her again to accom-
 pany her into the gardens. At length,
 Lady Bell’s anger being a little cooled,
 she recollected Darnford’s involuntary
 exit, which set her a laughing, and she
 became curious to know what was be-
 come of him. She, therefore, proposed
 to sally forth in search of their party ; but
 Emma said, she thought it would be very
 imprudent without a *Chaperon*, or any
 man to protect them, to begin rambling
 anew ; and, while she was yet speaking,
 the Ladies and Darnford appearing in
 sight, she and her companion joined
 them.

“ Bless

“ Bless me !” cried Mrs. Mourtray, “ what a fright I have been in !—and, to this minute, I don’t know how it all happened.”

“ Ask Lady Isabella, Madam,” said Darnford ; who, fullen and enraged, had not yet opened his lips :—“ ask her ; she can best explain it.”

“ Pardon me,” said Lady Bell ; “ you are the fit person, Mr. Darnford ; because you investigated the matter to the bottom.”

Darnford coloured, and muttered the words rascal, &c.

Lady Bell then, in her own way, related to Mrs. Mourtray her adventure ; adding, “ Did you ever hear of such impertinence ?—Such a vulgar-looking fellow to dare such an insult to a woman of my rank !”

“ I can’t

"I can't think what could provoke him to it," said Mrs. Mourtray.

"La!—nothing but a little joke of mine, at his *quizzical* figure."

Mrs. Mourtray looked grave; but expressed some astonishment, that such low ill-behaved persons were permitted to enter the gardens. Lady Bell then, turning to Darnford, asked how he had recovered his legs.

"Upon my word, Madam," answered Darnford, "in fighting your battles I got into a confounded scrape: curse the brute; but, if I had him here, I would give him a pretty good horse-whipping, I promise you."

"You must certainly fight this man," cried she; "but take care to stipulate with him, that it shall not be near a ditch;"

ditch;" and she burst out into a violent fit of laughter.

"Fight a blackguard!" exclaimed Darnford, biting his lips, and provoked beyond endurance; "fight him, indeed! I wish Ladies would talk less, and never of what they do not understand."

The company now separated, and left the gardens; Darnford, with very ill grace, seeing the Ladies to Mrs. Mourtray's carriage; and Lady Bell, much out of humour, was set down in Grosvenor Square.

CHAP. III.

WHEN Emma, on her return home, had leisure to reflect on the occurrences of the morning, she could not help wondering, more than ever, at the impropriety of Lady Bell's whole behaviour, and that any attachment should subsist between her and the Captain. It was plain she could have no real affection for this man, whom she had tried to mortify by her satirical speeches; and she observed that his temper was extremely irritable; though she allowed, that the ill success which had attended the display of his prowess, and the humiliation he had received in the presence of Lady Bell, afforded some excuse for his ill humour: yet still he was, in no respect, a suitable match for her, being neither supported by rank, fortune, nor character. She

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knew

knew that Lady Bell might, at this time, be married to a man of high fashion and fortune, and so universally esteemed and unexceptionable in every respect, that, though her father always hinted he had secret views of his own for her establishment, it seemed very probable, that, in favour of this person, he would wave them; but she treated him so capriciously that he seemed inclined to withdraw his addresses.

Emma now thought, that as Darnford and Lady Bell had parted in the morning mutually piqued against each other, that, if ever she could be persuaded to break with him, this was the moment.—Desirous, therefore, of talking this matter over with her, before her displeasure had time to cool, she asked her mother, who was going out in the evening, to let her pass an hour with Lady Bell, to which Mrs. Mourtray assented; only observing, she was a strange girl, and that she should
be

be very sorry to see Emma resemble her in behaviour.

When Emma arrived in Grosvenor Square, she found Lady Bell and her Governess in the drawing-room: the latter dozing over a large folio, which looked like sermons, and the former employed in drawing caricatures; but, throwing down her pencil upon Emma's appearance, and screaming for joy, "Well, this is delightful, indeed!" cried she, "I little expected to see you! Mamma and Sister don't return till to-morrow. Come, sit down: you are quite charming."

Emma, after a little chat, longed to enter upon the subject that occupied her thoughts; yet she was a good deal embarrassed how she should manage, to avoid offending Lady Bell, and to induce her to listen, with patience, to what she might style an officious remonstrance.

But Lady Bell herself opened the way; and, having forgotten her resentment against Darnford for his last speech, she began talking of him; till, suddenly recollecting herself, she stopped; and, in a coaxing manner, said:—"Do, my dear *Madame du Plomb*, take that pondrous book into the next room: there its effects will not be counteracted by our light prattle; and, as the door shall remain open, between your slumbers you may see that I am safe here; for I know you are ordered never to lose sight of me." The complaisant Governess did as she was desired.

"Now the room is lightened," said Lady Bell, "we will resume our subject, and I will, without reserve, tell you on what footing Darnford stands with me."

"Excuse my being your confidante," said Emma: "I have already seen too much

much; and I confess my business here, to-night, is to try and open your eyes on the unworthiness of this man, and to conjure you to have nothing more to say to him."

"What are your objections to him, pray?"

"Your own good sense, I should imagine, Lady Bell, must render it needless for me to point them out. You must have heard that he is a gambler; and, in every respect, a very indifferent character; moreover, I firmly believe, it is less your person than your fortune that attracts him."

"I should think," answered Lady Bell, smiling, conceitedly, "that this little person of mine might be loved for itself alone; but I grant, nevertheless, that I should be a vast match for Darnford; yet

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I am

I am not at all clear that I shall marry him: I rather think not."

"I am extremely happy to hear it: then, for God's sake, dismiss him at once."

"Not so fast," cried Lady Bell; "not so fast:—O! you have no idea of the joy of a little snug flirtation! How it breaks the dull *routine* of life, and"

"Fie, fie, Lady Bell, you cannot be serious, I am sure."

"Indeed I am; it is vastly diverting to see him walking up and down the square, with his arms folded, looking ridiculously piteous; then I peep through the blinds, and give him an encouraging nod; he does not dare bow, for fear my mother, or somebody else, should see him from some other window; but he winks and smiles. Well, then, we have many pretty

pretty contrivances ; but—no, no ; I will tell you no more, for fear you should betray me.”

“ My good Heaven ! is it possible, Lady Bell, you can be so indiscreet, and for a man that you are even doubtful whether you shall marry ? Who possesses not one quality to attach a reasonable creature ! Think, I conjure you, what this very man himself must think of you !”

“ Think of me ? why, that I have very good eyes, and do justice to his perfections.”

“ But less justice to your own character ; and, if ever you should marry him, will he not recollect this behaviour to your disadvantage ?”

“ Whatever his thoughts may be, he shall not dare communicate them to me.

When I marry, I shall first prescribe upon what terms ; two of the conditions shall be, no lectures, and perfect liberty."

"Should a man agree to these terms, how can you depend upon his keeping them? But, to leave this idle conversation, suffer me to remind you, that if Lord and Lady Wilmington should have the least suspicion of an affair, which, permit me to say, is highly disgraceful to you, their resentment would be violent ; I tremble only to think of the consequences.

"Pho ! pho ! there is no fear of their knowing any thing of the matter. They depend entirely on Madame *du Plomb's* vigilance ; and she is so deaf and stupid, that I make her believe whatever I please. As for Darnford, his own interest makes him very cautious."

"Why,

“Why, why;” cried Emma warmly, “why will you trust him? Let me,” continued she, pressing her hand, “beseech you, my dear Lady Bell, to break off this clandestine affair; what is past cannot be retrieved, but proceed no further; indeed I love you too much, not to warn you of your danger, when I see you on the brink of ruin.”

“Nonsense!” cried Lady Bell; “you take every thing seriously, and my rattle for gospel.”

“Have you, then, only been jesting all this time?” cried Emma eagerly—
“Would I could think so; but your frequent walks with”

Here she was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Lord Wilmington, who exclaimed—“Miss Mourtray! I am most agreeably surprised; I thought Bell had been alone.”

"I am going this instant," said she, courtesying, and moving towards the bell.

"Nay, nay; do not let me drive you away," said he, stopping her: "I am so happy, so delighted, I am, upon my honour, when I see you . . . do, dear Bell, step into the library and fetch my snuff-box; I have left papers of importance on the table, or I would send a servant.

"How charmingly you look, Miss Mourtray!"

"We will go down together," said Emma: "Good night, Lord Wilmington."—And away they both went.

"Upon my word," said Lady Bell, bursting into a laugh, "Papa had contrived for himself a little snug tête-à-tête, of which you maliciously disappointed him. Old and young, you see, Emma,
are

are all alike ; Cupid deals about to the right and left."

" I flattered myself," said Emma, gravely, " to have left you in a more serious disposition, and I am grieved to be mistaken. Good night, Lady Bell."

" And good night, sweet Emma—but stop—one word before you go : I wish to ask you a question ; no joke, I promise you."

" Well, what is it ?"

" Tell me, when you dream, do you ever fancy yourself Marchioness of Miramont ?"

" Lady Bell ! what can you mean ?"

" Rather let me ask you what *you* mean ? and, *entre nous*, my dear, if it is absurd for Lady Isabella Fontelieu to

think of *poor* Captain Darnford, is it not equally so for *you* fill up the sentence as you please, and now farewell." —As she finished these words, she ran away laughing.

No words can express Emma's confusion; her legs tottered as she moved towards the carriage, hardly knowing what she did; she got into it, and, flinging herself back, she burst into tears.

"Good Heaven!" she cried, "is it possible that my weakness should be thus clear? Am I become, then, the subject of even Lady Bell's sport? I shall now never dare look at Lord Miramont, lest he, likewise, should perceive, what I hoped was known only to myself."

Recollecting, however, that Lady Bell often spoke without any meaning, and that this spiteful speech might be a mere random shot, uttered in revenge for her
good

good advice, and not in consequence of any observations she had made on her behaviour to the Marquis,—she endeavoured to tranquillize her mind.

Conscious of having acted a friendly part towards this light girl, who, she apprehended, was more entangled than she herself even owned, she resolved, after hearing her avow principles that she detested, no longer to cherish her friendship.

Lady Bell's words, however, made a deep impression on Emma's mind; and thence arose a train of reflections that had never before, or only transiently, passed through her thoughts. The birth, fortune, and elevated rank of Lord Miramont she had not hitherto considered as insurmountable obstacles in the way of her wishes; his unfortunate attachment had appeared the chief. But, now, she blamed herself for presuming to look so high;

high; and half resolved she would conquer a partiality unbecoming to her situation.

But the first time she saw the Marquis after this prudent resolution, it began to waver; for vanity suggested, that, though not of an illustrious, she was of a very ancient, honourable family; that, in marriage, as the husband conferred, but did not gain, rank, he would not degrade himself, if ever he honoured her with the offer of his hand; and, as to fortune, *that* was too trifling a consideration, to a generous mind, to have any weight with him. Yet much as she loved Lord Miramont, her disapprobation of his principles concerning gallantry continued as firm as ever; nor did she wish to become his wife, unless he thoroughly reformed his conduct.

While Emma, with little or no resistance, thus indulged her partiality for
Lord

Lord Miramont, Sydney, on his side, became daily more in love with her ; not owing to any encouragement she gave him, but to the opportunities he had, of becoming more intimately acquainted with the excellence of her understanding, and the goodness of her heart.

Mourtray evidently encouraged his visits ; and even his wife tolerated them with better grace than formerly. An unfortunate circumstance interrupted her usual mode of life ; for she was seized with a rheumatic gout, which confined her first for a few days to her bed, and for a much longer time to her house.

It often happened, during this melancholy period, that her friends were too much busied with their own engagements to call upon her ; and she would have been condemned to a family party, but for Chowles and Sydney, who almost
ever

every evening passed a part of it with her.

The lovely Emma was the magnet that attracted them both; she never left her mother, unless when she had a party; and then Mrs. Mourtray insisted upon her going out, that she might gather news, and be furnished with matter for her entertainment.

Sydney, who possessed much information, and an elegantly cultivated mind, could adapt his conversation to every capacity; he, therefore, frequently entertained Mrs. Mourtray extremely; and he was so well bred, good humoured, and anxious to please her, that, almost in despite of herself, she acknowledged that he was a very agreeable companion: yet she remained immoveable in her wish of seeing her daughter married to Chowles, on account of the superiority of his fortune.

When-

Whenever Sydney made her a visit, she was always happy if Emma happened to be absent; and very averse that she should stir out, if she expected Chowles. Guarded as the former was in his behaviour, she had long noticed his attachment to her daughter; and, in those moments when she believed it would be hopeless, she was disposed to pity him; but if ever Emma shewed him more than common civility, this immediately roused her apprehensions that her daughter's heart might be moved by his persevering attentions.

She could not forbear communicating her thoughts on this subject to her husband: "I hope," said she, "that Sydney's frequent visits will not be attended with disagreeable consequences; for you must (even absent as you are) have observed, that he is dying for love of Emma."

"I wish,

“ I wish, with all my heart,” answered he, “ that I saw any symptoms on her side, of partiality towards him ; for the more I know of that young man, the more I admire him. Emma never can choose a person that I should prefer to Sydney for *my* son-in-law.”

“ How amazing ! You never seem to recollect, my dear, that at present he has scarcely bread ; and that, at the best, he will never be more than a poor Lord. One of the worst things a man can be ; for his rank will not allow him to live with the privacy of a plain Gentleman ; therefore, with an equal fortune, he is not so well off.”

“ Granted—But Sydney will have a moderate fortune ; and, perhaps, you yet may have some faint recollection of those days, when you and I, with about one quarter as much, thought ourselves the happiest of beings ; *you* did not *then* consider

sider fortune as the *only* consideration worth attending to in marriage."

Mrs. Mourtray coloured: "Bless me!" cried she, "any body would suppose, to hear you, that I was become quite an altered creature! I never said money was the *only* consideration, though it is one of the most essential; if, upon Lady Clannarmon's death, Sydney was to step at once into the whole of her fortune, I should say nothing against him; but I know, and he did not deny it, when I asked him, that it is his intention equally to share his future inheritance with his brother. A most romantic idea; and, I hope, you will allow this quite alters your statement of things."

"Do you suppose," said Mourtray, smiling, "this noble trait of his character, which you call romantic, can have any other effect upon me, than to make me wish the more for his alliance? He will

will still have enough left to satisfy a reasonable person ; but were his fortune, by what he thinks an act of justice, reduced even below mediocrity, I would sooner give my child to a man of such an upright mind, than to the richest man in the kingdom, if he were not deserving of her."

" He is certainly generous, and all that," said Mrs. Mourtray ; " but, then, look at his face !"

" Nonsense ! Did not you own yourself, the other day, that there was such goodness imprinted on it, that you sometimes almost thought him handsome ?"

" No, no ; I only said I forgot, when he has been uncommonly pleasant, that he was ugly."

" A good countenance never alters, which is not the case with fine features ;
how-

however, it is impossible that Sydney's face should ever disgust any sensible woman ; and his figure is extremely well."

" But Emma does not love him ; that alone is a sufficient objection."

" She may hereafter ; and certainly is still less partial to your friend Mr. Chowles, who has nothing to recommend him but his wealth."

" Yet, I tell you fairly, Mr. Mourtray, I would give the world to see her married to him. What a figure she would make, with her uncommon beauty, covered with jewels ! How she would adorn his house and table . . ."

" And how his coarse manners," interrupted Mourtray, " would make her blush ! No, my dear, he never would do for her ; and, as I think so differently from you, in regard to both these persons, I
do

do intreat that you will say nothing to Emma about either: in a matter of so much importance to her future happiness, I wish her choice to be free and uninfluenced by us."

Mrs. Mourtray, though not without reluctance, promised to comply with his request.

CHAP. IV.

NOTHING now was talked of but a masquerade, to be given in a private house. The preparations making for this were said to be superb ; and great interest was made to procure tickets, which were very scarce, as the company was limited to a certain number, proportioned to the size of the house.

Emma, who had never seen a masquerade, and her mother, who had seen many, equally longed to see this : but the latter, to her great mortification, was still a cripple ; and the hopes of the former of getting tickets, were not very sanguine, not having the least acquaintance with the lady who was to give the masquerade ; she had, however, frequently

quently hinted her wishes to those who might have some interest with her, but hitherto without effect.

The evening before *that* fixed for this important affair, as she was sitting at work with her mother, with no other company than Sydney, who was reading aloud a new novel to amuse Mrs. Mourtray, a letter was brought to Emma, which, the servant said, required no answer, and that the chairman who left it was gone.

To give her leisure to read it, Sydney laid down the book. "Pshaw! 'tis nothing but a begging letter, I dare say," cried Mrs. Mourtray, disliking the interruption. Emma, however, tearing it open, was agreeably surprized at the sight of two masquerade tickets. After many exclamations of delight, both the Ladies began conjecturing whence these treasures came, for the direction was in
an

an unknown hand, and the seal only a wafer.

“ This is a piece of gallantry of Mr. Chowles, I fancy,” said Mrs. Mourtray.”

Emma could not agree to this ; her suspicions rested on a very different person, but whom she did not choose to name. This idea, however, rendered the present doubly welcome. She reminded her mother, who still insisted it must be Chowles, that, in the morning, he had bitterly inveighed against the ingratitude of the lady who had peremptorily refused him a ticket, though she had been invited to his ball.—The book, of course, was opened no more, and consultations were held concerning the dress and *chaperon* she must immediately provide for the occasion : but as Sydney could be of no use in these, he took his leave with the more reluctance, for this was his fare-

well visit, having promised his brother, who was now in quarters in Canterbury, to be with him the next day. Lady Wilmington, Emma knew, intended going to the masquerade ; she, therefore, dispatched a note directly to her, requesting to have the honour of being of her Ladyship's party, which, for many reasons, she preferred to all others. She obtained no answer till the following morning, when she received a very laconic refusal, written by Lady Wilmington's groom of the chambers, who, with a cold apology, informed her that her Ladyship's party was already full.

Extremely disappointed, and not a little angry, Emma considered what the motive could be of this rude and disobliging behaviour ; for it had so happened, that she had never seen her since the day she had accompanied her to the auction. Emma, indeed, remembered she was then in a very ill humour,

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that a person of her fashion and figure had not yet been able to procure a single ticket !”

Nothing but the shortness of the time, that obliged her to decide speedily, induced Emma to acquiesce with this recommendation, to which she felt the utmost reluctance ; however, she engaged Mrs. Prouting, giving her the spare ticket.

This Lady, who had before been almost in a state of despair, received it with rapture ; and, totally blind to any defects in her person, she prepared to decorate it with such a profusion of fanciful ornaments, that Emma trembled to think how completely ridiculous she would appear ; and how many unpleasant sensations she herself should feel by being thus accompanied.

In vain she tried, with all possible delicacy, to persuade her to make herself a less conspicuous figure :—Mrs. Prouting only heard her with displeasure. She then resolved to adopt more than usual simplicity in her own dress, that her taste might not be confounded with that of her companion.—A white gauze dress, that fitted her shape to perfection, and with no other ornament to her face than her own fine hair, arranged by herself,—strikingly contrasted with Mrs. Prouting's gaudy appearance ;—she looked, however, most uncommonly lovely. Late in the evening she received two more tickets, likewise, from an unknown person ; one of these she bestowed on Mr. Prouting, and the other on her brother. These Gentlemen attended the Ladies, and removed some little timid apprehensions which Emma felt, when she thought she should only have been under Mrs. Prouting's protection.

It may easily be imagined, that a scene so novel to her as a masquerade could not fail of delighting her; but after the first *coup d'œil*, her whole thoughts were bent on discovering Lord Miramont; and she paid little attention to all the unmeaning nonsense she was assailed with from all quarters; even the encomiums bestowed on her figure, at that moment, touched her little, for they did not come from the right person.

She had now been through all the rooms without finding any mask that seemed, in person, to resemble Lord Miramont, which much damped her vivacity; whilst her companion, who wandered about with a vacant mind, unengaged in any pursuit, laughed and talked indiscriminately with all those who would attend to her; and, to Emma's great surprise, a dance being on the point of beginning, Mrs. Prouting declared she would join in it

it with a Harlequin, who stood capering near her.

"Do you know, Madam," asked Emma, "your intended partner?"

"No; but what signifies? If he can dance, that's enough for me: you'll dance too, I hope."

As Mrs. Prouting spoke very loud, two masks heard her; they had sometime been diverting themselves with her absurd figure and manner, and, likewise, in admiring the graceful form of her companion: both now stepped forward, eagerly soliciting the hand of the latter.

But Emma had no idea of engaging herself to dance with strangers; and, civilly declining their offers, she took hold of Mr. Prouting's arm, saying, she would place herself under his protection till the dance was over; and then proposed to

him to sit down, as fortunately a sofa near the door was at that instant vacated.

Hopeless of finding amusement in conversing with him, who, she knew, by sad experience, only acted the part of Echo in society, his mind being a perfect blank, she sought to divert herself with listening to others; but the squeaking and feigned voices, added to the noise of the music, prevented her hearing more than broken sentences of very uninteresting stuff.

Just then a fine tall figure, habited like a Turk, entered the room; and, after casting a look around, as if in search of some particular object, approached her, saying—"The nut-brown maid!—I am sure!—who else has such a lovely form!"

Although the voice was disguised, and the mask such as to shew no part of the face, yet the height and figure of the
Turk

Turk seemed to correspond with *that* which was uppermost in her thoughts; her heart was in a tumult of delight, though mingled with apprehension that the mask might not be Lord Miramont: with a faltering voice, therefore, she said —“ It is very possible I may not be unknown to you, though I disclaim the compliment you are pleased to make me.”

“ Your modesty,” said he, “ is not the least of your perfections.”

And then, with great civility, he asked Mr. Prouting if it would not be possible to make room for him on the sofa.

Prouting, who had heard his address to Emma, concluding him to be known to her, immediately drew closer into the corner; she moved a little nearer to him, and the Turk seated himself by her on the other side.

“ I thought myself very fortunate,” said he, “ when, after much difficulty, I was enabled last night to have the honour of sending you two tickets.”

“ I suspected,” said she, “ whence they came, and acknowledge myself much obliged to whoever sent them.”

“ Talk not of obligations,” cried he: “ I fairly own I was not disinterested in wishing you here ; for I have long been anxious to have an opportunity of communicating to you something of the utmost importance.”

Emma was all ear, scarcely breathing, so afraid was she of losing a word, as the Turk spoke extremely low.

“ My happiness,” continued he, “ depends entirely upon you ; and, though you seem to suppose you know who sent
you

you the tickets, it is possible you may be mistaken."

Emma started:—"Then we are not," said she, "upon equal terms; before this conversation proceeds further, I must insist upon knowing who you are."

"Would to Heaven," cried he, "your feelings were in unison with mine!—then your heart would already have informed you. Can you not, however, recollect some man amongst your acquaintance, whose eyes, whose manners, though not his tongue, have told you a thousand times that he adores you?"

Emma, who had sometimes flattered herself that Lord Miramont regarded her with partiality, applied this sketch to his conduct; to which she thought it bore so strong a resemblance, that again she felt assured it was *he* himself, who thus avowed what she heard with the most

exquisite pleasure.—Timidity, however, sealed her lips.

“ Will you not speak to me, charming creature,” said the Turk: “ tell me, at least, that you hear me without displeasure. If I could but hope for pity and pardon, then, indeed—but, no; I dare not, in this dreadful uncertainty of your sentiments—I dare not discover myself.”

These extraordinary apprehensions, in the supposed Lord Miramont, seemed to Emma so unnecessary, that she felt little disposed to encourage him; she, therefore, only coolly said—“ Expect no answer from me; tell me your name, and then I shall know what to say.”

“ I would tell it instantly,” replied he, “ if I did not apprehend you would fly from me. Certain unfortunate shackles, which, if you know me, you must be sensible it is not in my power to break,
alone

alone prevent me from openly acknowledging the tender adoration I feel for you."

Emma's amazement and indignation, when she heard him thus avowing, in the same breath, a passion for her, and that he was entangled in an intrigue with Lady Fredville, which he had not the resolution to break, deprived her of the power of speech; and the Turk, auguring well of her silence, added:—

"If I dared hope that your mind would rise superior to idle prejudices—then indeed, sweet Emma, I might be blessed with your love, and be the happiest of men; but . . ."

"Dare not," cried she, haughtily, "to insult my ears a moment longer;" and, forgetting that she was not to be supposed to know the Turk, she added, with the greatest emotion, rising from her seat—

feat—" Indeed, I little thought your Lordship capable of"

" Ha! you know me then!" interrupted the Turk; but Emma, without attending to him, took hold of Mr. Prouting's arm:—" Let us begone, Sir," said she; " this room is too warm for me."

The Turk did not attempt to stop her:—" I see you are angry," whispered he, " yet I rely upon your prudence for secrecy."

" Merciful Heaven!" said Emma to herself, as soon as she had escaped from him; " is *this* the man to whom I have been so partial?—and *thus* does he declare what I thought would make me so happy to hear? Thank God! my eyes are now open, and never, no, never will I bestow another thought upon him."

Much

Much as she had been revolted by his indelicate allusion to his situation, her indignation did not attain its highest pitch, till his infamous views upon her seemed too clear to admit of doubt: the manner, too, in which he had hinted at her prejudices, and his assurance that he relied on her prudence and secrecy, shewed that he presumed she might easily be won.

The whole of this conversation appeared to her like a frightful dream; and, when Mrs. Prouting joined her, she seemed in such a torpid state that the former concluded she was ill. Emma, who really felt disordered, did not, in answer to her inquiry, deny it, and would most gladly have gone home; but her companion assuring her that she would be very well, after drinking a glass of water, and standing a few minutes by an open window, she passively did as she was desired. It also occurred to her, that strong as the proofs seemed, that the odious Turk was

was the Marquis, yet it was possible that she might have been mistaken ; and, perhaps, some chance in the course of the evening might develope the truth ; she, therefore, tried to rally her spirits.

Chowles's figure, habited after Holbein's portrait of Henry the Eighth, which she now observed for the first time, produced a momentary smile ; but, as he attempted to draw her into conversation, she broke from him.

" Now, how cruel you are," cried he ; " here have I been at a monstrous expence and trouble to get this rich dress, to appear to the greatest advantage in your eyes, and had the Lord knows what plague besides to get a ticket, on purpose to wait upon you ; never could get here till this minute ; and now, after all, you won't speak to me !"

" Your

"Your dress, Sir, is very handsome," said Emma, "and suits you admirably."

"Aye, so I thought: you gladden my heart by approving of it; but why do you speak in such a faint voice? Ha! what's the matter with my pretty"

"You are, I see," said she, "in-correctible; so I shall leave you."

Emma, then, under pretence of wishing to see the company in the rooms above, hurried Mrs. Prouty up the stair-case, who required no solicitation to assist her in escaping from her cousin; for she had long seen, with much ill will, his increasing passion for Emma, as she dreaded nothing so much as his marrying. Amid a very brilliant circle, Lady Wilmington and her daughters, by their air, were soon recognised by Emma.—Several beaux attended them; but no other

other Ladies appeared to belong to this party. Lady Wilmington, who happened to be in high good humour, and who heard every body, especially the men, admiring Emma, now chose to be very civil to her, and to lament that she could not have the pleasure of being of use to her.

Lady Bell (dressed as a flower girl), after abusing her, good humouredly, for having taken no pains to disguise herself, said:—"In the next room there is a most comical old Conjuror, and he tells every body their fortunes: you can't think what odd things he says."

At that instant the Conjuror, with a long white beard, appeared at the door, all the company crowding about him; but he waved his wand with great solemnity, and they suffered him to pass.

"Do,

"Do, do let us go to him," cried Mrs. Prouting, eagerly, and hear what he will say to us."

Emma, almost indifferent to every thing, followed her mechanically.

"Pray, good Mr. Conjuror," said the former, "tell me my fortune."

"Most willingly, Lady!—show me your hand. Then, after a slight examination, the Conjuror said—"The misfortune you apprehend"

"What misfortune?" exclaimed Mrs. Prouting.

"Nay, if you interrupt me, I say no more."

"Well, I'll be silent: go on!"

"What

"*What* you apprehend, Lady, will not happen; but your influence will be insufficient to prevent some other fair one's success; and you will do well to teach yourself how to be satisfied, hereafter, with your own humble domestic comforts."

"Humble domestic comforts, truly!" cried Mrs. Prouting.

"What stuff the man talks! What can he mean?"

But the Conjuror, not heeding her, said, very respectfully,—"May I presume, fair maid, to request a sight of your hand?"

Emma gave it; and he drew her a little aside: then, in a voice so low that she alone could hear him, he said, looking at her hand, and shaking his head—
 "Ha! this is a very intricate business indeed!"

indeed! I must have recourse to my glass:"—and he produced a small mirror, on which he fixed his eyes attentively.

"You are encompassed, I perceive, with lovers," said he:—"In the front appear shew and glitter, to cover disgusting vulgarity:—next, but not yet clearly confessed, appear beauty, wealth, and titles; fashion and elegance glossing over loose principles. In the back ground, skulking from view, stands a beast of prey, watching to devour innocence; and, equally at a distance, veiled in mystery, but with no sinister motives, I perceive a kneeling figure, like that of an humble desponding lover, who wishes, but dares not offer, his vows of honour, truth, and love."

Emma, who listened with the utmost astonishment, and could not imagine how this stranger became so well acquainted with her concerns (for she clearly comprehended

prehended some, though not all the persons to whom he alluded), could not resist saying, however sensible she was of the extreme absurdity of putting a question to him, that implied her having some faith in his divination—"Since you pretend to know so much, and much more concerning me than I know myself, tell me, then, what will be my fate?"

"A cloud conceals it," replied the Conjuror, "even from my penetrating eyes.—What I shall say, therefore, is only my poor opinion; which is, that, good and amiable as you are, you are destined to be happy, if, in the most important event of your life, you do not suffer yourself to be too much guided by advantages more shewy than solid."

With this unsatisfactory answer Emma retired, still wondering at the Conjuror's singular language. In his fanciful sketch of her lovers, she was convinced he meant

to delineate the Marquis and Chowles; but she could not so easily make out those in the back ground. One of them had, indeed, some traits of resemblance with Sydney; yet, as he always seemed anxious even to conceal his love from herself, how was this stranger to know it? But, might it not be Sydney himself, who performed the part of the Conjuror? about whom many were busying themselves with different conjectures, though not one seemed to know who he was!— Yet Emma saw not the slightest probability, on reflection, that Sydney was the person; for, besides her knowing that he had left town, the Conjuror was a much taller and larger man.

From these perplexing thoughts her attention was, for a moment, diverted by the pert gaiety of Lady Bell, the flower girl, who insisted upon the Conjuror's telling her fortune; to which he seemed averse, declaring, at the same time, that she

she was certain the old wretch could know nothing about her.

“ Why then, Lady,” said he, “ do you ask to hear it ? ”

“ O ! merely to hear what nonsense you’ll invent.”

“ Have a care what you say,” said the Conjuror, holding up his fore finger ; “ I may tell you *more* than you may like to hear.”

“ I defy you :—come now,---begin.”

“ I will whisper it, then, in your ear.”

“ No, no :---speak out.”

“ Since, then, you command it,” said he, in a solemn manner, “ I bid you beware of long journies, knapsacks . . . ”

“ Stop,

"Stop, stop; I will hear no more," interrupted she, seeing her mother and sister drawing near; and then, turning to Emma,—“I do believe,” whispered she, “it is old Nick himself! Who could have thought he would say such odd things!”

Emma by no means was surprised at what the Conjuror had said to Lady Bell; because any body might observe, that Darnford was always hovering near her, when she was not immediately under her mother's eye.

An exclamation that now escaped from Lady Bell, excited Emma's curiosity:—“Who do you say looks so very handsome?” asked she.

“Why Miramont, who has this age been standing looking at us.”

Emma raised her eyes, in despite of her recent resolves, and she saw Lord Miramont, without his mask, in a beautiful Spanish dress; his hat adorned with white plumes, and a diamond button and loop; never had she seen him look so handsome: she turned, however, from him instantly, though not without a deep sigh, regretting that beauty and depravity should be thus united in him. Lady Fredville was leaning upon his arm.

Curious, however, to know how long he had personated a Spaniard, Emma enquired of Lady Bell, who told her she was ignorant; but that, great part of the evening, he had tormented her to death in a blue domino. Emma remembered, likewise, to have been addressed by a blue domino, who pressed her extremely to dance with him; and a faint hope glided into her heart, that he had never appeared as a Turk. She wished to ask more questions

questions about him, but apprehensions of Lady Bell's raillery withheld her.

A great bustle, just then, round the Conjuror, again attracted Mrs. Prouting, and her passive companion, towards him: he was preparing to tell Chowles his fortune.

"Well, what do you see? Make haste," cried the latter, laughing:—"It must be funny enough, I warrant," said he, addressing the spectators, "to see how he'll be puzzled.—Be quick, I say, old wisdom."

"I must have leisure," said the Conjuror, "to make observations in my mirror.—Ha! I see a very stately edifice, indeed; but—surely the foundation is rotten:—Ah! I thought so:—there, it crumbles, it totters, it will fall to the ground!"

“Curse the fellow, what does he mean?” cried Chowles, staring wildly round, and totally forgetting the feigned character of the Conjuror:—“My fine house, but just built, at Clapham, tumbling already to the ground! The Lord have mercy upon me! I am all over in a tremour!”—“Shall I proceed?” said the Conjuror.

“O, pray do!—I am mighty curious to have the rest; but no more about the house, or I’ll pluck your beard off.”

“Well, let us see:—costly furniture, loads of plate, hoards of jewels and money”

“D—n the fellow!—why, now, he certainly means to have me murdered!—and is making out an inventory of my effects, on purpose to get me robbed!—But let’s hear the end.”

“I have

"I have passed over the beginning," cried the Conjuror; "for there I only saw shabby clothes, a pen stuck behind the ear,"

"'Tis false; it is a d----d lie," roared Chowles; but the Conjuror, not heeding the interruption, continued:---"empty pockets, filled at last; but how?---The objects in my glass are now confused; yet I faintly distinguish schemes and projects, amorous and commercial"

Here Chowles, with his eyes more expanded than usual, and grinning, nodded approbation:---"Well, well; go on."---"Artful affociations, airy bubbles, empty casks, foundered"

"Hold your devilish tongue," cried Chowles, foaming with rage:---"a pretty kettle of fish, indeed, you have made of my fortune!--Such a farrago of nonsense, jumbled together for no purpose but to

drive me mad!--I could find in my heart to drub you well, I promise you."

But, probably, he did not find himself so valiant; for he walked off, muttering, "What a fool I was to listen to this abusive rascal!"---and the Conjuror, perceiving he had excited infinite curiosity in the surrounding crowd, as well as laughter, thought it prudent to retreat; and, slipping out of the room, he was seen no more.

Mrs. Prouting would willingly have remained, to the last minute, at the masquerade; but Emma was so fatigued, both in body and mind, that, at length, the former consented to go home.--Whilst they were waiting for their carriage, they saw Henry in earnest conversation with a very pretty Nun; who, Emma learned, was Miss Silbourne, a great heiress: of course he was not disposed to quit her; and Emma, and her party,

party, went away without him. As soon as she got home, she hastened to bed; but her thoughts were too much busied with the events of the evening, to suffer her to sleep till a very late hour in the day.

CHAP. V.

ABOUT four o'clock, Mrs. Mourtray, who had envied her daughter's happiness all the preceding evening, went to her chamber, as she heard she was stirring, not a little impatient to learn every particular of the masquerade; but Emma, faint and dejected, had not spirits to satisfy her curiosity: however, after dinner, finding her mother much dissatisfied at hearing nothing, when she had expected to hear so much, she attempted to describe some of the dresses and characters she had observed, but her account was so lame and imperfect, that Mrs. Mourtray lost all patience.

“ Bless my heart!” cried she, “ at your age, I should have gathered enough matter at such a masquerade to furnish

con-

conversation for a twelvemonth! What, did nobody speak to, or notice you? And did you hear nothing?"

"Ah!" thought Emma, "I heard too much!"

To pacify her mother, she then told the story of the Conjuror; relating, with much fidelity, all that she had heard him say to others, but passing over very slightly what he had said to herself.

Mrs. Mourtray was very well diverted, till she heard the adventure of her friend Chowles, which shocked and offended her so much, that, occupied with that, and in puzzling her brains to guess who the impudent Conjuror could be, she forgot to enquire more minutely into what had befallen her daughter, who had no inclination to relate the mortifying dialogue that passed between her and the Turk.

In vain she tried to forget this odious man; his figure swam constantly before her eyes.—One moment she persuaded herself that it was impossible Lord Miramont should thus have insulted her; and as he had been seen first as a Domino, and then as a Spaniard, there scarcely seemed time, she thought, for him to act the Turk. She could not recollect whether she had seen the blue domino during her conversation with the former; could she have done that, it would indisputably have proved, that Lord Miramont had not been the Turk:—yet, having discovered the rank of the latter, by the inadvertency of her own expression, which he had not attempted to disown, she could fix on no other man, with whom she had any acquaintance, that this suited, excepting Lord Miramont.

If she could have supposed it possible, that Lord Wilmington would go to a masquerade, she might have suspected him,

him, in consequence of his odd looks, and flourishing speeches; but there was no instance in her recollection, of his ever appearing at any public place; his habits of life, therefore, rendered it highly improbable; and likewise, that, wary as he was supposed to be, he should thus commit himself.

The Conjuror, too, was as mysterious a person as the Turk; unintelligible as part of his jargon had been, there was enough of it clear, to convince her, he was perfectly well acquainted with the private history of almost all those whose fortunes he told: how he came by this knowledge appeared to her incomprehensible—yet, as her conjectures could not develope these mysteries, she sought to compose her mind, and trusted that time would elucidate the whole.

Two days after the masquerade, Chowles invited himself to dine with the

trays ; and after relating, with great repentment, the pretended Conjuror's behaviour, he swore he should not mind giving a thousand pounds to know who he was ; for the rascal, added he, did his best to injure me in the most tender point,—in my credit."

" Your credit !" said Mourtray, gravely ; " surely *that* rests on too firm a basis to be injured by the idle words dropped at a masquerade !"

" O, certainly, certainly," cried Chowles ; " and the fellow, probably, did not even know my name ; yet he provoked me sadly."

Mourtray now retired to his study, and Mrs. Mourtray said, the Conjuror ought to have been kicked out of the room : —" But is it possible," continued she, " that you should not, by his voice, or
some

some other circumstance, give a guess at the person?"

"I have not the most distant idea," answered Chowles; "the fellow was too well disguised; and you will laugh, I am sure, for I can't help laughing myself at my folly; but I declare his nonsense ran so in my head, that I could not rest till I had been to Clapham; so, yesterday, though tired as a dog, down I went, found all right,—the walls as firm as a rock."

"So you did not understand," enquired Emma, "that he only spoke figuratively?"

"O, hang his figures; how the devil should he know any thing of them? But, I warrant, I am his match there, and will figure with him, in any way, as long as he pleases. But, pray, Miss Mourtray,

tray, tell us a bit what he said to you?"

"Why, he pretended to see, in his magical glass, several very unpleasant objects, that he bade me beware of."

"Umph! He seemed mighty fond of the dismals. But surely he talked to you of sweet-hearts, and such like. What sort of a husband did he promise you? —ha!"

"I have not promised to repeat all he said; neither would it entertain *you*, or my mother, to hear it."

The topic of conversation was then changed.

The next day was *that* appointed for a great assembly at Lady Wilmington's; which, she said, should only contain the cream of the fine world: but, as Emma would

would be ornamental, she gave her, at the masquerade, a card for herself and family; trusting that Mrs. Mourtray's confinement would prevent her from profiting by this pretended civility.

But Mrs. Mourtray, who had of late mended fast, thought herself quite well enough to venture in a crowd, which she loved beyond measure; and her husband excusing himself being of the party, the Ladies and Henry, about ten o'clock, repaired to Lady Wilmington's.

Emma knew not whether she ought to seek, or to avoid, an opportunity of obtaining an *eclaircissement* relative to the Turk, of which she thought she had a chance at this assembly; but, at all events, she determined to be extremely circumspect in her behaviour.

As it was yet early when she and her party arrived, they traversed a long suite
of

of fine apartments, very thinly filled ; a formal stateliness seemed to prevail ; and Emma, already dejected, followed her mother confused and abashed, sensible that numbers of eyes were rudely fixed upon her. In the last of these rooms, Lady Wilmington sat opposite the door to receive her company ; she seemed rather surprised to see Mrs. Mourtray, to whom, with petrifying civility, she made a few speeches on her recovery ; and then recommended to her to make her own party, though she well knew this was almost an impracticable task, where she had scarcely an acquaintance. Emma she treated with cordiality, and chatted a few minutes good humouredly with her and Henry ; whilst poor Mrs. Mourtray sank down in a seat behind the door, very angry with herself for having left her own home.

Nothing could be more dull than this collection of *cream*, though consisting of
persons

persons of the highest rank and fortune, and of the most brilliant appearance ; for the Ladies seemed to have made a point to array themselves in all their finery for this occasion, and the eye was dazzled with gold and jewels.

Together, with fine clothes, people seemed to have put on a different air and manner, than what naturally belonged to them. Some affected a condescending smile ; others a discreet whisper ; and all seemed struggling ineffectually against *ennui*, partly occasioned by a scarcity of young men. A few, in hopes of relief, now eagerly seized on the vacant card tables ; and the gloomy silence was broken occasionally by the sound of *odd trick—two by honours—great and little casino*.

Emma, too timid to venture back through these formidable apartments, seated herself near her mother ; who, contrary to custom, was not disposed to speak.

speak. At length Lady Bell appeared, and, commiserating Mrs. Mourtray's rueful countenance, she made her a party at cribbage; and then, taking Emma under the arm, led her to the anti-room, which, by this time, was much crowded, and formality hence had taken its flight. Some of the same persons who had been sitting screwed up in the great apartments, looking prim and demure, were here laughing and talking as loud as they could.

Lord Wilmington, whom Emma had seen before deeply engaged in discussing politics, now approached her with his usual civility; and, after a few compliments, inquired how she had been entertained at the late masquerade. She answered, very coldly, "Not at all."

"You quite amaze me!" cried he; "a pretty young Lady, like you, not to find entertainment in a place, where you must

must have been admired as one of its fairest ornaments!"

Flattery, and the Turk, were so connected together in Emma's brain, that she said hastily, with her eyes fixed on Lord Wilmington—"What character, pray, did your Lordship assume?"

"Me! Miss Mourtray, me! at a masquerade! You cannot seriously ask me this question."

"Very seriously, Lord Wilmington; were you, or were you not, there?"

"What could have induced me to go thither, overwhelmed as I am with business? No, Miss Mourtray, my family can vouch for me, that I was shut up in my library the whole evening."

"Yes," said Lady Elizabeth, who stood near her father, "Papa was too busy

busy even to see us before we went hence."

"That's no proof," observed Lady Bell, archly, "that he did not slyly, after our departure, take a peep of the masquerade."

Lord Wilmington frowned; but, turning to Emma, with a forced smile, he said—"You must have had some reason for your question, Miss Mourtray; was it that you saw some body there, whom you thought like me?"

"For your Lordship's sake, it is to be hoped, I did not; because the only person that there was a possibility of supposing to be you, was a most odious mask."—And, to avoid further explanation, she hastened to mix in the crowd; still in a state of incertitude, though by no means inclined to place much reliance on his Lordship's veracity.

Emma,

Emma, who observed that her brother, here, was as much engrossed by Miss Silbourne as he had been at the masquerade, was now by him introduced to her: she thought her prettier than ever, and that she appeared extremely gentle and amiable, but very shy. This did not, however, discourage Henry from attaching himself to her; and she did not seem displeased with his attentions, though she always kept close to her aunt, Lady Bingfield, who was a most respectable old woman.

Mrs. Mourtray, having played as long as she liked, and finding little to amuse her at the assembly, was thinking of departing, when her son pressed her to prolong her stay for a few minutes; and Emma, while they were conversing together, saw Lord Miramont enter the room: she turned pale at his approach, dreading, lest a word should fall from his lips, that should compel her to believe he had been the Turk.

With

With his usual gay unconcern, he accosted her, desiring her to acknowledge how admirably he was disguised when last they met; observing, she did not seem to know him in the least.

“ You did then speak to me, Lord Miramont,” said she, in a faltering voice; and, with a serious air, “ pray how were you dressed at that time ?”

“ In a blue domino, with a very singular mask; but you were cruel, and refused to dance with me; afterwards, when I was in a Spanish dress, and unmasked, I could never catch your eye.”

Emma remembered these circumstances; yet she hesitated whether she should venture to ask him further questions, still apprehensive of what she might hear.

“ How

"How grave and thoughtful you are to night, Miss Mourtray," said Lord Miramont; "and the other night you suffered an odious dog of a Turk to have so long a conversation with you, that nobody else was honoured with your notice."

"Umph!" thought Emma, "is he abusing the Turk now by way of a blind; repenting, perhaps, that he betrayed his principles prematurely."—Then casting a penetrating glance on Lord Miramont's face, she said—"If I could have foreseen what I should hear from that pretended Turk, I would not for worlds have listened to him a single instant. I hope, however, he mistook me for somebody else."

"That is not probable, for you were not in the least disguised: but, pray (if my question be not indiscreet), did you ever discover who this Turk was that
thus

thus incurred your resentment? A horrid wretch he must have been, I am sure !”

“ I never did discover him.”

“ I wonder,” said Lord Miramont, archly, “ who the happy fellow was, whom you meant to indulge with your conversation, when you mistook the Turk for him.”

“ It is of little consequence,” replied Emma, blushing ; “ but pray, Lord Miramont, never mention the Turk again to me ; I wish to drive his odious figure from my thoughts.”

“ I never will name him again,” said he ; “ and though I disliked him at the masquerade, I now hate him a thousand times more ; yet I own my curiosity is on the rack about him.”

Lord

Lord Miramont's countenance looked so open as he spoke, and all his words seemed so frank and natural, that Emma, who frequently had reproached herself for supposing he could be capable of insulting her, was now almost persuaded that she had wronged him; but, though this cheered her spirits, she still thought she ought to be upon her guard till the matter was entirely cleared up; and feeling, therefore, that she could not converse with him with her former ease and gaiety, she behaved to him with great reserve.

This he seemed to remark with a degree of pain and surprize, that secretly delighted her; but not to hear his complaints, and distrusting her own steadiness, she hastened to get out of his way.

Reflecting, after she left the assembly, on all that had passed, she thought,—though she might venture to acquit Lord Miramont,—his uncle did not stand so

clear of suspicion ; yet it was possible that both might be equally innocent, and that some person, who knew her by sight, though a stranger to herself, might have diverted himself at her expense, merely to embarrass and perplex her.

CHAP. VI.

THE morning after Lady Wilmington's assembly, Henry, being alone with his sister, hastened to ask her opinion of Miss Silbourne; and, if she did not think her quite an angel.

“As for that,” replied Emma, “I cannot say, not having the advantage of any acquaintance amongst the class of angels; but I certainly think her a very charming girl, and that you would be extremely happy, if you could get her for a wife.”

“Oh! I should be the most blessed of mortals!--She has not only beauty enough to turn a man's head, but she is the gentlest, sweetest little creature I ever

saw ; and, besides, she will have a very large fortune."

" Perhaps, then, if she were, less handsome and amiable, you would find full as many charms in her."

" O! upon my soul, you mistake: if she had not six-pence, I should prefer her to every girl on earth; but I will not pretend to say that I do not rejoice that she has both beauty and riches."

" If, then," said Emma, " you are so much in love, it is to be hoped you will try to become worthy of her; and, as the first step, lead a more regular life than you have done since you entered the army."

" Regular!--why, my little preacher, am I not as regular as clock-work already?"

" You

" You perfectly understand me, Henry !
However, let me ask, if your going out
last night, or rather this morning, after
we returned from Grosvenor Square, is a
proof of your regularity ?"

" Certainly ; for it is what I do every
night : I never begin to feel my existence
till all you sober people are fast asleep ;
and a few of the little hours then, are
worth all those that precede them."

Emma shook her head :---" Depend
upon it," said she, " this is not the way
to gain Miss Silbourne."

" She knows nothing about the mat-
ter," said he ; " and I hope you will not
be so officious to inform her of it ; for,
though she is a sweet creature, her no-
tions are cruelly precise, owing to the
ridiculous style of her education. Her fa-
ther is a good old man, but quite formal,
and of *la vieille cour* ; so is her aunt,

Lady Bingfield: yet I think I shall be able to manage her pretty well; and, if once I can establish myself firmly in my angel's heart, I shall set both the old ones at defiance."

"How did you become acquainted with this family, whose manners and habits form such a contrast to your's?"

"By the merest accident in the world: owing to a silly incident at the play, not worth mentioning, but which frightened the old Lady; and I, who had been in an ecstasy of admiration, viewing her niece the whole night, fortunately was of some use to her. A few days afterwards we met at the Masquerade: we renewed our acquaintance; I was presented to the father; and now you know all; for I have not yet (I know not what the devil ails me) had courage to speak out to Miss Silbourne."

The

The entrance of the Ladies Fontelieu put an end to this conversation. A visit to Emma from Lady Elizabeth was a very rare event ; and she wondered what could occasion it ; for she did not entirely credit the civil speeches she made, of sorrow and regret, that she had been so long prevented having the pleasure of waiting upon her. Her affability extended also to Henry ; who, having nothing to do, just then, that he liked better, very readily engaged in conversation with her.

The truth was, Lady Elizabeth, who, though handsome, had been hitherto peculiarly unfortunate in suiting the taste of the men, and who began to apprehend she must lower her pretensions, was suddenly become very condescending to all handsome youths ; and having, the preceding night, had an opportunity of examining, attentively, Henry's person, it had met with her approbation ; and as

she knew he resided with his parents, though not how seldom he was at home, she willingly accompanied her sister and Madame Duplin, in hopes that she might gain another view of him.

While she and Henry were chatting together, Lady Bell, after a little desultory conversation with Emma, said she had a message to her from her father; and, perceiving her amazement, she added, "It is about the emigrants. It seems, papa has lately heard many moving circumstances of their situation, which were before unknown to him, and he meditates doing something effectual for their relief; and, as he knew how kindly you interested yourself about them, he bade me tell you what he was sure would give you pleasure, at the same time requesting you will send him their direction."

Emma returned her compliments and thanks to his Lordship, writing on a card
the

the name of the street, and No, where the emigrants lodged. But her gratitude was not very warm; for she thought Lord Wilmington had, too late, recollected the distress of these French connections of the house of Fontelieu; and that his meditations concerning them might, at last, end in his doing nothing at all; having, during the winter, seen many instances of his deceiving people with false promises.

It struck her, too, as so singular that he should send her this message: never, in his life, having named the subject before, that she again suspected he was conscious of having committed himself imprudently at the Masquerade; and thus, by feigned benevolence, hoped to secure her silence.

She resolved, therefore, to say nothing of Lord Wilmington's sudden kindness to the Duchesse, whom she called upon,

as often as she could obtain her mother's permission; and the more she saw her, and the amiable *Sidonie*, the more warmly she became attached to them both,

As soon as the Ladies Fontelieu were departed, Emma revolved, in her mind, her conversation with her brother, whose mode of life had often given her great uneasiness. His family saw little of him: he rose very late, seldom dined at home, and, she suspected, often staid out the whole night; or, at least, did not return till it was very far advanced. She knew that her mother, indulgent to Henry even to weakness, kept her father in ignorance of many of these *ecarts*; yet, that he saw enough to displease and vex him; though, from the mildness of his temper, he forbore laying much restraint on him.

Emma,

Emma, however, hoped that a passion for a virtuous woman would reclaim her brother.

Mr. Silbourne had, for some time, lamented his daughter's shyness, attributing it, in some measure, to the very retired education that, he now regretted, he had given her: he was, therefore, very solicitous to have her mix in the world; where, he hoped, she would acquire a certain degree of modest ease, as far removed from boldness as from that excessive timidity, very distressing to herself, and even to him.

His sister, Lady Bingfield, advised him to give a little dance, and to insist upon his daughter Selina's doing the honours of his house: this was a task she would willingly have declined; but, as she liked the idea of the dance, she submitted to the condition prescribed. Amongst those invited on this occasion were the Mour-

trays; and Emma flattered herself to derive from it no small pleasure. She knew that Lady Bingfield, who had the charge of inviting the company, had a very general acquaintance, and certainly would not fail of placing so fine and fashionable a man as Lord Miramont foremost in her list of dancing men; and, as she had now fully persuaded herself, she had no cause to be offended with him, she felt doubly anxious to see him; having (as she imagined) remarked more concern in his countenance, when she had judged it right to behave to him with unusual reserve, than was consistent with indifference.

Besides, she hoped she should discover whether he had sent her any tickets for the Masquerade. The odious Turk had acknowledged having sent two; but who had sent the others, she was yet ignorant; and though she would, upon no account, enquire of Lord Miramont concerning them,

them, as the question would imply, that she had the vanity to suppose he had interested himself about her; yet it was possible he himself might mention the circumstance, as well as the day, which would entirely clear the matter, as the Turk mentioned that his tickets had been sent the evening before the Masquerade. But, to her infinite mortification and disappointment, Lord Miramont did not appear at this dance, though she discovered that he had been invited; and, as he sent no excuse, he was expected to the last moment.

Nothing, however, could be more common with him than to forget invitations, and to neglect sending excuses.—He was equally remiss as to paying, or to returning visits; so that he was generally in disgrace with some one, whom he had offended; and often he was the only person who had no idea of it.

This

This negligence, and total disregard of *etiquette*, amounting often to rudeness, drew upon him the imputation of pride and haughtiness; of which, nevertheless, he was entirely free. But even those who were angry with him, when he came in their way, found it impossible to retain their displeasure; for there was something so noble in his air, and captivating in his countenance; so easy and agreeable in his manners; that often, without speaking, he could, by a smile, or a nod, conciliate approbation.

But Lady Bingfield, whose ideas of politeness were strained to the highest pitch, and who incessantly exhausted her breath in declamations against the ill-breeding of modern young men, felt now so provoked at Lord Miramont's disappointing her, that, after citing him as the ringleader of all offenders, in this way, she vowed he should never,
on

on any occasion, be noticed by her again.

“ Hear what the old cat says,” whispered Lady Bell to Emma:—“ poor Miramont!—how wretched he will be when she *cuts* him!”

“ Hush! dear Lady Bell,” said Emma; her eyes are fixed upon you, and she will hear you.”

“ I don’t care if she does. Did any body ever see such a set of *quizzes* as she has collected together? Not a knowing man in the room!—and, as to the women,—look at their horrid figures!—not one of them did I ever see, but at some poking old dowager’s rout!”

“ Nay,” said Emma; “ I see some very pretty, well-dressed women; and many of them are of high rank.”

“ Rank,

“ Rank, ay ; but what’s that without fashion?—a mere sound ; nothing at all ! Who cares for an ugly vulgar Duchefs, or my Lady *this*, or my Lady *that*, if they do not belong to a certain fet ?”

“ You will allow, however, that Miss Silbourne is beautiful, and perfectly well dressed ?”

“ A poor tame thing !—rather pretty, to be fure ; but looks like a frightened hare ; and has neither air nor manner.”

“ I wonder why you came here, Lady Bell ; for probably you knew, by your acquaintance with Lady Bingfield, what you had to expect.”

“ Ah ! thereby hangs a tale !—I had laid a fcheme to get Darnford here, and your brother promifed me he would bring him ; but no fooner did that old witch, Lady Bingfield, fee his name on a
lift

list of dancing men, which Henry Mourtray wrote by her desire, than, most spitefully, she scratched out poor Darnford's."

"For what reason?"

"Because, when she gave a ball, last year, he refused to dance with some frightful *Miss* she had picked out for him; and this was the reason she assigned!—nor could your brother soften her flinty heart."

Emma thought it very probable, that, in her exclusion of Captain Darnford, Lady Bingfield had been actuated by other motives; for this man's character, as a gambler, every day became more notorious; and she had reason to believe, that he had not a little contributed in corrupting Henry, a considerable degree of intimacy subsisting between them.—This evening, however, Henry had no
leisure

leisure to miss such an associate, for he was entirely absorbed in his admiration of Miss Silbourne: he not only danced the two first dances with her, but afterwards contrived to sit by her, whenever she was not dancing; and Emma fancied she distinguished him more favourably than any of the men who flocked about her; for a young heiress, rich and handsome, could not fail of having a numerous train.

Mr. Silbourne, who never lost sight of her, did not appear desirous of controuling her actions; nor to disapprove of Henry's attentions: he even seemed particularly disposed to shew civilities to his relations; and, though he had no acquaintance with Mrs. Mourtray prior to this night, he entered cordially into conversation with her, and requested that his daughter might be allowed to cultivate an intimacy with her's, to which she gladly assented.

This

This ball had seemed to Emma of eternal duration, though she had been extremely admired; but she had danced with none but people quite indifferent to her; and her mind had been the whole night in a state of expectation, which had ended in disappointment.

Lady Bell, as she left the room, gave her a hint, that she should call upon her shortly; and, the next morning, she arrived in Wimpole Street.

“ I did not expect to see you again so very soon,” said she; “ but Mamma has lent me her carriage to go a shopping, so I wish you would take a jumble with me.---Madame du Plomb is waiting for me below, so let us be off.”

After what Mrs. Mourtray had seen of this very volatile young Lady's behaviour, in Kensington Gardens, she did not much like her daughter should engage
in

in any party with her; nor did Emma like it herself; but Lady Bell was so urgent, that she obtained her wish; and as the Governess was with her, and that they were only to stop at a few shops, Mrs. Mourtray hoped it would not be possible for her to lead Emma into any scrape.

No sooner had Lady Bell and her companion quitted Mrs. Mourtray's sight, than the former said, "I do assure you, Mamma is become so watchful and suspicious, and Papa so cross, that I lead a miserable life."

"Ah! Lady Bell," said Emma; "can you deny that she has not some reason to be so? Perhaps both Lord and Lady Wilmington have a suspicion of (allow me to say) your ill-placed partiality."

"Stop a little," cried Lady Bell; "only reserve your sermon till we get
into

into the carriage; and then, in return for it, I will play the part of Joseph, and interpret your dreams."

Emma, vexed and confused, shook her head, and was going to say something; but Lady Bell hurried her into the coach; and there she laughed and rattled away, in astonishing spirits, without any interruption from her companions.

They drove into the city; and after Lady Bell had made her purchases of a number of insignificant things, on their return home, as they approached Somerset House, she exclaimed:—"O! positively, I must stop, and see the exhibition:"—and she pulled the check string.

"Surely, Lady Bell!—Surely!" cried Emma, alarmed; "you cannot think of such a thing."

"Say

“ Say not a word,” replied she ; “ see it I will, and this instant.”

In vain Emma and the Governess represented the impropriety of her intention, and conjured her to wait till she had an opportunity of accompanying Lady Wilmington, who would certainly disapprove of her going thither, without her knowledge: she obstinately persisted in her resolution.

“ Why, I would not, for the world,” cried she, “ omit taking you there, my dear *Madame* ; for you, who are so great a judge of painting, shall decide which of our English artists is the most worthy to paint your portrait, which I have some thoughts of having done for my dressing room.”

The Governess bowed, and said she did her too much honour.

Lady

Lady Bell continued:—"I have already fixed the costume that, I think, will best become you. But, pray tell me, are you acquainted with Shakespear?"

"*O que oui Miladi ;*" and, she added, that she recollected that Monsieur de Voltaire had once a great *demelé* with Monsieur Shakespear.

"Just so," said Lady Bell:—"I expected to find you well-informed on this subject. You remember, then, in one of Monsieur Shakespear's plays, a famous Matron, who is usually attended by a man, called Peter: now, I think, your comely person (here the Governess bowed, and smiled) would appear to great advantage, in her dress and character; and, if Miss Mourtray's servant, Peter, had not, of late, acquired rather too polished an air, I would have borrowed him to complete the picture."

Madame

Madame Duplin, not relishing this association with Peter, made a wry face; and the carriages, which had hitherto stopped the way, having made room for Lady Wilmington's, Lady Bell, springing out of it, caught hold of Emma's arm, laughing at her own nonsense, and hurrying up the stairs, to enjoy the sight of Madame Duplin, puffing and panting, in her endeavour to keep up with her.

They had scarcely entered the first room, when Capt. Darnford joined them; but, though Lady Bell pretended to be surprized to see him, Emma had no doubt that it was a concerted scheme, and she was angry with herself for having quitted the carriage.

Her vexation was not unobserved by Lady Bell; but, having gained *her* point, she had now no other solicitude than to distance both her and her Governess, in which she succeeded; for Emma's good-nature

nature would not suffer her to leave poor Madame Duplin, who kept pushing people along to get near her charge, ejaculating, every instant, "*Ah! mon Dieu!*"—But her charge was not to be overtaken, and soon contrived to get into the thickest of the crowd.

The Governess now, with a most piteous look at Emma, said, "*Est-il possible?*"

"You may well ask that question, indeed!" said a thundering voice, in her own language, which both the Ladies knew to be Lord Wilmington's, "*Est-il possible?*" continued he, "that I should find you here, and see my daughter thus accompanied yonder!" pointing to Lady Bell, leaning on Darnford's arm, quite of the opposite side of the room.

Madame Duplin, in the greatest dismay, and trembling in all her joints, attempted

to justify herself; but the Earl was already gone; and, in an instant, returned with his daughter, who had lost somewhat of her usual courage.

Lord Wilmington, after bowing, and saying a few civil things to Emma, said, sternly, to Madame Duplin, “Lady Isabella has heard part of my sentiments already on *her* conduct; and, assuredly, *Madame*, *your’s* shall be fully discussed in Grosvenor Square.”

He then commanded them to go home immediately; nor did he leave them, till he saw them seated in the carriage.

“Well,” said Lady Bell, as soon as her father had left her:—“Well, to be sure, I am in a rare scrape! But who could have thought that old dad, who never stirs till near four o’clock out of his house, unless to attend the levee, should just fix on this morning to visit the

the exhibition!—He has treated me with the overture of the piece, already, in a very sharp key; and, I suppose, we shall have a grand *finale* at home, in which Mamma will join.”

“ I am not at all surprized at what has happened,” said Emma; “ and if, by Captain Darnford’s means, you get into no worse scrape, bad as this is, you will be fortunate. Decide, for Heaven’s sake! to break off all intercourse with this man; and never again condescend to employ such little, ungenerous, arts and schemes with your friends, as those by which you induced me to accompany you in this clandestine expedition.”

“ So, you are angry, too!—and *Madame*, I see, is crying!” said Lady Bell; “ however, I will take the whole blame upon myself; and, I flatter myself, that, with a few penitent looks, and promises

of amendment, I shall lay the troubled spirits at home.—In the mean while, let us think no more about this unlucky incident.”

Emma, however, could not so easily dismiss it from her thoughts; and when, on her return home, she related what had passed to her parents, they both concurred in opinion, that she should have no further intercourse with such an artful girl as Lady Bell, excepting in the presence of her family, when it could not be avoided.

“ You see, my dear girl,” said Mr. Mourtray, “ that Lady Bell, who once appeared to you so amiable, and so sincere in her friendship, is a very different person from what your ingenuous but romantic disposition had imagined.—I trust, therefore, in future, you will not too hastily form attachments

ments that may give you cause of after-regret.—And now, adieu ! for I am, this evening, going some miles on my road to Downton, where I have urgent business."

CHAP. VII.

THE accounts Mourtray heard of the proceedings of the person he had employed, by Chowles's advice, in his works at Downton, hastened a journey he had long projected; and the day after his departure, Emma received, as she was sitting down to dinner with her mother, a letter by the penny-post, written in French, and signed by her friend Sidonie, to say, that, in consequence of a very unexpected piece of good fortune, her parents had been enabled to remove themselves and family to more convenient lodgings than those they had hitherto occupied; and that, being full of impatience to inform her (their first kind friend) of all that had happened, they earnestly requested she would favour them with her company at eight o'clock that evening, at No. —, — Street, St. James's; and the

the letter concluded with many assurances of unaltered friendship.

Emma's heart dilated with pleasure as she read this letter; firmly believing that Lord Wilmington, contrary to her expectations, had really kept his word; and that, by his means, her friends were now placed in a situation suitable to their rank and merit.

Full of impatience to learn every particular of this agreeable event, she besought her mother to permit her compliance with their request; to which Mrs. Mourtray the more readily acceded, as she was herself engaged, without her daughter, to meet, at an early hour, a little quiet *casino* party.

Emma, therefore, as soon as she had set her down at the house where she had her engagement, gave Peter the direction she had received from Sidonie; and bade

him, when he knocked at the door, to enquire for the French Ladies; well knowing the impossibility of teaching him to pronounce their names.

The carriage stopped at a small but tolerably decent looking house; a maid servant opened the door, Peter obeyed his orders; and, returning to his young Lady with a nod, that she perfectly understood to be a sign the Ladies were at home, she alighted; but before she gave any directions to Peter, she desired the maid would enquire, whether it would be agreeable to the Duchess that she should stay the whole evening.

The girl flew up stairs with the message, and returned for answer, that the Ladies said, the longer she staid the better. Upon which Emma dismissed the carriage, giving orders that it should fetch her at a quarter before ten. The maid now marched before her up a narrow staircase, and

and through two small rooms, which terminated in a spacious drawing-room, where she desired her to sit down; adding, that the Ladies were in their chamber above, but that they would come down in a few minutes.

Emma concluded, by the appearance of these apartments, that the emigrants' affairs must be greatly changed indeed; and hardly could she persuade herself this change could be wrought by the parsimonious Earl. She remarked, too, with surprize, how little the entrance or the exterior of the house, corresponded with the elegance within.

While she was making these reflections, she heard the doors of the adjoining rooms opening; she rushed forward—but, instead of the emigrants, to her utter amazement, she met Lord Wilmington!—He, as well as herself, made a gesture of surprize:—“Ah! Miss Mourtray!”

Mourtray!" exclaimed he, "I little expected to find you here!"

"I am really amazed to meet your Lordship," cried Emma, "and will send to inform the Duke and Duchess of your arrival."

"No, no; I have sent to them already: but, my dear Miss Mourtray, you gave me a wrong direction; I went to seek for them near the Haymarket."

"They did live there, my Lord, and are only lately removed hither; perhaps you can explain the cause;" and she watched his countenance whilst she spoke, but it was impenetrable; and she added:—"I wonder, however, what can detain them so long."

"No matter; let you and I, in the meanwhile, have a little sociable chat; for I never see you now, sweet Miss Mourtray,

Mourtray, which, upon my word, I regret most exceedingly ; I do, indeed."

Emma bowed very coldly, disliking her situation ; extremely impatient to be released from it, and curious to know whether he was really the beneficent author of the emigrants' good fortune.

" I observe, with pleasure, Miss Mourtray," said Lord Wilmington, " that London has not in the least robbed your cheeks of that lovely bloom I have so often admired in ——shire. You will find this sofa an easier seat than that chair."

" Pray," said Emma, without moving, " how is Lady Wilmington to day ? I heard she was not quite well yesterday."

" O ! she is very well—Do you guess my business here, my dear Miss Mourtray ?"

H 6

" Yes ;

"Yes; I conclude I may ascribe to your Lordship some pleasant circumstances that have befallen this family.—*If* so, I can easily account for this visit."

"Why, things are not exactly as you imagine—not absolutely so. I am come, however, I give you my honour, to make them some very advantageous propositions; to which I am induced by a motive, that I should be too happy if you would permit me to develope to you."

"This is by no means necessary, Lord Wilmington," said Emma, gravely: "reserve your communications for those, who, by belonging to your family, may be thought to have some claim upon you."

"The claim of beauty," said Lord Wilmington, in a very soft voice, and advancing towards her—"the claim of
beauty

beauty, I do, indeed, acknowledge to be irresistible; and if the Duchess, or this Sidonie, had one half of your charms, then, indeed, they might command me. — Yet, suffer me to communicate . . .”

But Emma attended not:—the whole of Lord Wilmington’s conversation bore so strong a similitude with the Turk’s, that her suspicions now amounted almost to certainty; and, sickening with disgust, she rose abruptly, and pulled the bell, but she found the wire was broken; she was going, therefore, towards the door to call the maid, firmly determined not to remain any longer with him; but the Earl prevented her, by standing with his back against the door; and would have taken her hand, if she had not snatched it away.

“What is the matter?” cried he: what does dear Miss Mourtray wish?”

Emma,

Emma, feeling how much she was in his power, strove to say, with calmness —“ My wish, Lord Wilmington, is, that the Ladies may be requested, either instantly to come down, or to permit my waiting upon them above.”

“ How cruel you are,” said he : “ why should you wish to deprive me of the exquisite pleasure that I enjoy by a happy chance ?”

“ Chance !” thought Emma ; “ there seems more than chance in this extraordinary meeting !”

Yet how to put an end to it she could not tell. Vexed and embarrassed, she paced the room, with her eye every instant turned towards the door, whence Lord Wilmington stirred only a few steps ; and, gazing ardently at her beautiful figure—“ Let me recommend to you,” said he, “ my sweet Miss Mourtray, to
have

have a little patience. Your French Ladies would hear with amazement that you should scruple to pass a few minutes alone with me ; for they have none of the prejudices”

He had not finished the sentence, when Emma, who had been some instants meditating her escape, darted out through a gib-door, covered with pictures, which had struck her eye while he was speaking : this door (the key of which she turned after her) opened into a long passage leading to the staircase ; but the latter was so dark, that she incurred the risk of breaking her neck as she ran swiftly down.

Regardless, however, of danger, she thought only of flight ; and, apprehensive of being detained by the maid, whom she considered as the accomplice of Lord Wilmington, she had no sooner reached the passage, than she exerted all her strength

strength to unbolt the street door; but her efforts to do this, did not seem likely to succeed.

Her terror now is not to be described: and Lord Wilmington, with a candle in his hand, appearing on the stairs, she felt hopeless of escaping from him.

“ Dear Madam! Miss Mourtray!” exclaimed he, “ what can be your intention? Whither are you going? Do let me beg—let me intreat—wait at least for my carriage”

But without attending to him, urged by despair, Emma redoubled her endeavours to remove the obstacles of bolts and bars she encountered: while, trembling in every joint, she was thus employed, the maid came running into the passage, drawn thither by the Earl's loud voice, still vehemently remonstrating against Emma's departure.—However,
just

just as the girl, encouraged by a wink from him, rushed forward to seize her by the arm, Emma had the good fortune to get the door open, and, darting out, to escape from their clutches.

No sooner had she closed the door, than, swift as lightning, she flew along the street, in defiance of a heavy shower of rain, which fell so copiously, as shortly to wet through her muslin gown; and her head and shoulders had not even the slight protection of hat or cloak.

But solely intent on her escape, and dreading a pursuit, she was sensible of no inconvenience; and, oftener running than walking, she reached the upper end of St. James's Street, when she felt herself suddenly stopped, by two extended arms.

“Hey-day!” cried a voice, which she knew directly, with infinite joy, to be
Lord

Lord Miramont's,—“ Hey-day! whither
so fast?”

“ Thank God! it is you Lord Miramont!” cried she, clasping together her hands.

“ How happens this?” said he. “ Is it possible? Do I really see Miss Mourtray? I am all amazement!—In God’s name, what can you be doing in the street in such weather, and at this hour alone?”

“ Well may you ask! but I have not breath to tell you,—let me but get away.”

“ Whence did you come?”

“ I am sure I scarcely know myself:—O! that I could but get a chair.”

“ Very singular indeed.”

“ All

"All I can tell your Lordship," said Emma, whose agitation almost robbed her of speech, "is, that I have just left a house in —— Street, where I understood the emigrants lodged, to whom you behaved so generously."

"The emigrants!" repeated he, "Ha! ha! ha! Upon my soul this is excellent!— But how came you, then, to run away from them?"

Lord Miramont's ironical laugh, and the levity of his manner, hurt and offended Emma. "I know not, my Lord," said she, "how I am to understand this?"

"Instead of answering your question," said the Marquis, "permit me to repeat mine, and to enquire, lovely creature, to what place you are now rambling?" and as he spake, he put his arm familiarly round her waist.

"Good

“ Good God !” cried she, disengaging herself from him, “ is it possible that you detained me to insult me ?”

“ Nay, nay ; talk not of insult, that is silly :—I did not, indeed, expect such a *bonne fortune* ; but hang me if I reject it.—You are a heavenly angel, and I will see you safe—ay, very safe !—”

“ Wretch that I am !” cried she, bursting into a passion of tears, and leaning against the rails,—“ O ! where shall I find protection ? When I saw you, Lord Miramont, I foolishly believed I need seek no further ; for, as a gentleman, I depended upon you : but this strange, this unworthy language, convinces me of my error.”

Her emotion was so violent, that she felt ready to sink, and Lord Miramont, much alarmed, said, with great vehemence, “ and protection you shall have ;
for

for God's sake compose yourself, dear Miss Mourtray, and forgive me.—I have, perhaps, jested a little unseasonably; but I am a monster to cause those tears to flow.—However, if you think my fault can admit of any excuse, I will confess (though I am now perfectly cool) that, just before I overtook you, I had drunk a confounded deal of wine, and sallying forth, ready for any mischief, in an unlucky moment I perceived you; and you will not be angry if I say, circumstanced rather oddly, but I am sensible I deserve your anger.”

“ Well, indeed, may you say oddly !” cried she, “ yet it would have been candid, if you had, from the first instant, supposed *this* could only have happened by some extraordinary accident, as it certainly did; without my having the smallest cause of self-reproach.—However, now, I desire your Lordship will leave me.

“ Leave

“ Leave you, Miss Mourtray! and alone! By all that is sacred, I will offend no more. I am inexpressibly hurt at what has passed; but I conjure you to rely upon my honour for protection.”

Lord Miramont so earnestly sued for pardon, and his manner, now, was so very different, that Emma's terror and indignation gradually subsiding, she held out her hand to him, which she just suffered him to touch, and then requested he would get her a chair.

But, with re-iterated apologies, and assurances of respect, he pressed her to suffer him to see her safe home; declaring, he implored this favour, as a proof that she was thoroughly reconciled to him; and that, in her wet clothes, she would be less liable to catch cold by walking, than by sitting in a chair.

Emma,

Emma, however, softened by his entreaties, would not consent to his continuing with her longer than till she could get a conveyance home; and as no chair could be found, they walked on in search of a coach.

The violent emotions which had so rapidly succeeded each other in her mind, had so totally overpowered her, that she was at length forced to lean upon Lord Miramont's arm: the tears still involuntarily trickled down her cheeks, which he perceived, and, with peculiar delicacy, took such pains to sooth and compose her, that she acquired sufficient spirits to account for her extraordinary appearance in the street: indeed, she thought she owed it to her character, to give Lord Miramont some explanation of the cause. She, therefore, briefly related what had induced her to go to the new lodgings of the emigrants; her disappointment in not finding them; the odd

odd equivocations of the maid; and, slightly touching on her surprize at Lord Wilmington's arrival, she mentioned the ostensible motive he assigned for his visit, but not her suspicions of the real one— Of course, delicacy, and the dread of embroiling the nephew with the uncle, obliged her to suppress all the objectionable part of the Earl's behaviour.

To account for her sudden departure from — Street, she said, that having waited a considerable time, expecting every moment to see the ladies, and finding they did not come, she grew impatient at the delay; and thinking her stay, thus circumstanced, an impropriety, she wished to go home; but not finding it possible to get any conveyance, she had set out on foot, flattering herself that she should have presently found a chair; and, being disappointed in this, she was hastening in search of a coach, when Lord Miramont stopped her.

The Marquis had listened to her attentively; he knew Lord Wilmington too well, to doubt one instant that she had been driven from the house by any other cause, than by some alarm she had taken at his behaviour; and her narrative had excited in his mind suspicions of a deep-laid plot against the innocence of Emma.

At length he said, "The circumstances you have related, and which I implicitly believe to be true, are so extraordinary, that I am inclined to think your French friends, so far from being in these lodgings, are totally ignorant of the infamous use that has been made of their name to decoy you thither."

"Good Heaven!" cried Emma, shuddering with horror, "You do not then believe they were in the house?"

"Certainly not:—recollect how often the maid contradicted herself, and the

whole of her insolent conduct. However, without venturing any conjectures, I will take effectual means fully to investigate this dark affair. In the meanwhile, my dear Miss Mourtray, do not let it give you any uneasiness; and depend upon my prudence, and attention, most sacredly to guard your name from ever being implicated in it."

Emma's heart was too full to permit her to thank him; yet, pleased as she was with his behaviour, she could not disguise her apprehensions of some unpleasant scene happening between him and Lord Wilmington, should he make any enquiries of him.

"Fear nothing," said Lord Miramont, "he is the last person to whom I should think of applying: the connection between us precludes all possibility of our conversing on this subject, and he was, likewise, my guardian. But no consideration

deration shall withhold me from pointing out to you the quarter whence danger has arisen, or may arise to you."

An empty hackney-coach then appeared; Lord Miramont stopped it, and, just as he was assisting her to climb the step, a man, muffled up in a great coat, passed hastily along the pavement, almost close to her. Emma fancied that he started, but she was certain that he repeated her name; yet she could not guess who the person was. Lord Miramont, now, after pressing in vain to be permitted to see her safe home, took his leave; first refreshing his memory as to the original place of abode of the emigrants.

Daring and free as was this young nobleman, with women whose principles were as free as his own, he yet respected virtue.—Hence, as soon as he perceived the unfeigned distress of Emma,

he became immediately cool; the fresh air, too, helped to dissipate the fumes of wine, and, feeling sensible that he had cruelly wronged her, he thought he never could sufficiently atone for his error.

His resolution, therefore, of discovering the iniquitous scheme, that he was convinced had been formed against her, was perfectly sincere.

CHAP. VIII.

EMMA judged it prudent, on her arrival in Wimpole Street, to assign, for the reason of her return before the time she had ordered the carriage, sudden indisposition ; and she retired to her chamber, glad to be alone. Nor was this indisposition just then a feint ; for she really felt disordered, owing to the hurry of her spirits, and to her being wet and cold.

If her late meeting with Lord Wilmington had been the effect of accident, yet his behaviour was such, that she could not doubt he had dared to harbour the most injurious designs against her honour. Her heart swelled with indignation at the thought ; and if, as Lord Miramont believed, the Ladies were not in the lodgings in — Street, then there could be little doubt that he had actually forged the

note which had thrown her in his way; and she felt fully convinced, that nothing but her own steady resolution in getting from him, had hindered him from an open avowal of his iniquitous views.

In future, therefore, she determined to avoid him most carefully; and even to discontinue any visits to his family, unless accompanied by her parents; and even then, if she had the mortification of seeing him, to behave with the most marked coldness.

She had half a mind to send a note on some pretext to Sidonie, merely to discover whether she was actually at the lodgings near the Haymarket; but the lateness of the hour, and her reliance on Lord Miramont's promises, decided her to wait till the next day.

Inauspiciously as her meeting had begun with the Marquis, it had ended in a
manner

manner the most flattering to her heart ; nor could she feel any resentment for the light freedom of his first address, all circumstances considered, since his subsequent conduct had so amply atoned for it.

Again she thought, that, with such sentiments and good nature as he had shewn on this occasion, it was impossible he should fail of becoming a valuable character, whenever the effervescence of his passions subsided ; and that he would determine to correct the errors of his present mode of life.

She had been for some time engaged in these reflections, when the clock struck twelve ; and, tired of waiting for her mother, who was not yet come home, she prepared to go to bed, when a letter was brought her, which she saw, by the seal, came from Lord Miramont.

With a fluttering heart she hastily tore it open, her eye running over the contents, not without a degree of hope of catching some word favourable to her secret wishes ; but this not being exactly the case, she more calmly, though a little disappointed, read what follows :

“ MADAM,

“ If I presume to intrude upon you at an unseasonable hour, I flatter myself you will have the goodness to pardon me, as I am led into this indiscretion by an ardent desire of contributing to your tranquillity.

“ I wish I could fully explain the enigma that has puzzled us both ; but all my endeavours to come at the truth have been ineffectual. I would not, however, withhold from you one moment the information I have gained, imperfect as it is.

“ Imme-

“ Immediately after I left you, I hastened to the lodgings near the Haymarket, and found, as I had expected, that your friends had never moved thence. They consented to see me; and their astonishment, when I produced the note with which you had entrusted me, is indescribable. La Comtesse Sidonie gave me some of her hand-writing to compare with it; and the difference was very plain.

“ But vexed as she was at this fabrication, the Duke (poor man!) was infinitely more so; for, having suffered so much in France, he is easily alarmed; and it was not, without great difficulty, that at length I convinced him there was not (as he suspected) some plot in agitation to injure himself and family.

“ From the vile woman in —— Street, I too well knew, by your account, that I could not expect truth, though her equivocations might throw light on the mat-

ter. To neglect nothing to gain the intelligence I wanted, I began with that sort of eloquence most likely to succeed with her.

“ The object of my enquiry was, to know who lodged in the house. She answered, with apparent simplicity, that a French family of fashion, consisting of a Gentleman, two Ladies, and two children, had been there for some days. I asked their names; but these, she said, being outlandish, she never could remember.

“ Had it not been so late, I would have made an attempt to see these persons; though probably it would have been ineffectual, as she repeated the story of the Lady's illness. She, likewise, said, it was mighty odd that so many folks came to enquire about lodgers, who could not see them; and, that early in the evening, a young Lady and an old Gentleman had
come,

come, who, after waiting ever so long to no purpose, took themselves off.—I give you her own words.—I then asked, fixing my eyes upon her, if she knew this Lady and Gentleman; when she answered, with feigned astonishment, that it was impossible she should know people whom she had never seen before.

“ I next made some enquiries in the neighbourhood; and, though the persons to whom I applied differed as to the number of the French lodgers, all agreed in asserting, that a family of foreigners had been established there about three days.

“ The owner of this house I understand to be a widow Lady, who left town the day she gave up possession of the two upper stories, reserving the lower one for herself; and I could learn nothing decisive as to her character; for it seems she had been but a very short time in possession of that house.

“ Thus you see, my dear Miss Murray, this inexplicable affair, in defiance of my best endeavours, remains involved in obscurity. Yet, I must freely confess, the suspicions your recital excited in my mind, continue in full force ; but, as it is impossible I can prove that they are well founded, I must be silent on the subject, though nothing can ever lessen my abhorrence of this detestable scheme.

“ Fortunately, as it was completely baffled by the dignity and steadiness of your conduct, I think it improbable that any thing further should be machinated against you.

“ Dismiss, therefore, I conjure you, from your thoughts, every uneasy apprehension ; and, likewise, forget that part of my behaviour, which I now recollect with equal shame and sorrow. Bad as is my excuse, it is certain I was not myself, till, affected by your distress, my brain became

became cool. When in the full use of my senses, I never can feel any sentiments that are inconsistent with those of the highest esteem and respect for the amiable Miss Mourtray; and have the honour to be, her

Very faithful and obedient servant,

MIRAMONT."

Emma's heart glowed with delight and gratitude, as she perused this letter. That Lord Miramont should take such a friendly interest in any thing that concerned her, and that he should have been so indefatigable in his endeavours to serve her, flattered her, so much, that, though she still shuddered to think of the dangers she had escaped, yet, since she had safely escaped them, she could scarcely regret circumstances which had afforded Lord Miramont so fair a field for the display of his courtesy; and had proved, that the
high

high opinion she entertained of the nobleness and benevolence of his mind was perfectly well founded.

But the more amiable he appeared, the more she regretted the little chance she had, even were he disengaged from his fatal attachment, of being considered by him in the light she wished, sensible that she had nothing to recommend her equally with, perhaps, hundreds of others; who, besides personal attractions, had the additional advantages of high birth, large fortunes, and splendid connections.— Thus did love correct Emma's vanity; for, as her passion gained force, she became diffident of those charms, of which she had once been rather too conscious.

Mrs. Mourtray, who had staid at her party far beyond the time she had intended, at length returned; and heard, with excessive astonishment, and equal indignation,

indignation, some of the events of the evening.

But, instead of suspecting Lord Wilmington as the author of these, or that his meeting with her daughter was premeditated, conformably to her prejudices against French people, she declared, without hesitation, that those emigrants, in ——— Street, had certainly allured her thither, rather from having designs upon her purse than upon her person; and, that the Earl's fortunate arrival, who had, perhaps, seen her enter this suspicious house, probably prevented the accomplishment of their purpose; for which, without having recourse to direct robbery, she supposed they had some piteous tale in readiness.

It was in vain that Emma tried to refute these strange and improbable notions; and suggested that, from the Earl's language and manners, suspicion ought to

to fall upon him alone, who had pretended he came, as well as herself, to see the Duke and Duchess; and, in confirmation of the very natural suspicions his conduct had excited, she mentioned her adventure with the Turk, which she had forborne doing, so long as she had any doubt who he might be.

Mrs. Mourtray totally rejected what, she said, could be no more than surmises, unsupported by proofs. She granted, that Lord Wilmington was not perfectly correct in his morals, and was believed to have low and obscure amours; but to suppose that he, an old and married man, should try to ensnare *her* daughter, a girl of fashion, was quite a ridiculous fancy; and, as to his behaviour during their interview, she was inclined to think Emma had been prudishly alarmed by a little unmeaning gallantry; wrong, certainly, for him to indulge in, at his age, and in his situation; but not a sufficient reason

to justify the odium that had been cast upon him.

“ All I hope is,” continued she, “ that this adventure will cure you of your foolish predilection for the French ; for no English head fabricated the note, the hand-writing being truly French, as well as the style. But, indeed, I always thought no good would come of your intimacy with that Duchefs and Countess (as they call themselves) ; for, though they pretend to know nothing of this pretty plot, I would not swear they had not a hand in it themselves.”

“ Good God ! Madam, how can you suppose such a thing ! They are people of the highest rank, and equally distinguished for their respectable character. Surely you forget that Du Maffon, whom you yourself like, speaks of them with every possible eulogium ; and that, since my acquaintance with them, which was
owing

owing to him, I have found them uncommonly estimable."

"Ah! poor man!—he may easily be imposed upon by his own countrymen, who all cling to each other; and so may you, too, by the goodness of your heart.--- However, perhaps, I may be rather too severe upon these people, in this instance; but that does not hinder me from thinking, that the French in general, the emigrants as well as the rest, would all cut our throats, if they could."

Emma did not attempt to argue with her mother upon her ill-founded prejudices against the French in general, because she knew it would be to no purpose; so she contented herself with saying, that, though she had only presumptive proof on her side, she must give the credit of this scheme to an English, and not to a French head.

She

She next turned the conversation on the Marquis, desirous of hearing her mother's sentiments of him; but she did not communicate the whole of his letter, not being willing to own that he had, even for an instant, excited her just displeasure.

Mrs. Mourtray allowed, that he had behaved extremely well; "and," added she, "you were very lucky that he happened to be disposed to act with such propriety; for many young men would have done otherwise; and I should not have expected better of him, as he is reckoned exceedingly wild. But he is certainly a very fine young man; and, when he has sown his wild oats, will make a good husband, some day or other. I think it very probable he will marry his cousin, Lady Bell, who is, in her way, at present almost as wild as himself."

"O, no!"

“ O, no !” cried Emma, colouring at the supposition :—“ O, no ! I am sure he neither thinks of her, nor she of him.”

Although Mrs. Mourtray was firmly persuaded, that, in the whole world, there was not a lovelier girl than Emma ; and that, with her excellent disposition, understanding, birth, and accomplishments, she was an object a Prince need not disdain ; yet it never once entered her head that Lord Miramont would ever think of marrying her, or that her daughter was in love with him ; for, besides having heard, in common with the rest of the world, of his attachment to Lady Fredville, as few days passed without some satirical squibs being thrown out relative to it in the public prints, she had no doubt, were this dissolved, but that Lady Wilmington would snap him up for one of her daughters.

In

In regard to Emma, adhering, as Mrs. Mourtray always did, to any opinion she had once taken up, she felt assured, that, if she had a preference to any man, it was to Sydney;—a preference that by no means met with her approbation.

The Ladies now retired to bed, where, in despite of fatigue and indisposition, Emma solaced herself, till her eyes insensibly closed, with repeating Lord Miramont's letter, which she already knew by heart.

CHAP. IX.

IT was not till a late hour in the morning that Emma found herself well enough to rise, feeling still the effects of the inclement weather to which she had been exposed, and the agitation her spirits had undergone the preceding evening; and she was finishing her breakfast alone in the drawing-room (Mrs. Mourtray being gone out), when she was somewhat surprised by a visit from Sydney, whom she had not seen since his departure for Canterbury.

He had, indeed, only asked for Mrs. Mourtray; but Peter, who thought it immaterial whether he saw his old or his young Lady, conducted him to the latter; never yet having been made to comprehend, that she did not choose to receive visits in her mother's absence.

Emma

Emma was grieved to see that Sydney looked very ill, and that an unusual sadness hung over him : as she held his character in high esteem, she enquired kindly after his health.

He answered, that he was tolerably well ; but his reply, though civil, was laconic ; and when she tried to engage him in conversation, she found him either absent or reserved. Convinced, therefore, that he had some secret disquiet, into which she had no right to pry, she became nearly silent, till recollecting he left town the day of the masquerade, she asked if he had never regretted not having seen it.

A faint smile then for an instant cleared his countenance, and shaking his head, he said :—" I fancy there was not much to regret there ; but, perhaps, Miss Mourtray, you are of a different opinion."

" Why

“ Why, no; upon the whole I disliked it, though the novelty of the scene at first amused me; and, amongst many dull, there were some curious and humorous characters: the most remarkable was a Conjuror, whom nobody could discover, though he seemed to know every body; and he told people's fortunes in a very singular manner.”

“ And did he tell your's, Madam?”

“ O, yes; and it really was surprizing how he came to know many of the things he said to me; but, though I did not at that time comprehend part of his meaning, I have reason to think I do now.”

“ He foretold, then,” said Sydney, eagerly, “ some agreeable event that has taken, or is shortly to take place.”

“ Not at all; he warned me against certain persons in mysterious language, whom

whom I have since discovered, and found them very like the picture he drew of them."

Though Emma spoke in the plural number, she only meant the application of her words to Lord Wilmington.

Sydney observed, that most fortunes were told, either by the parties betraying their own secrets, often unknown to themselves, or by some casual information the fortune-teller had gained of their affairs."

Emma said the former was impossible in regard to her, as she certainly made no discoveries of any kind to the Conjuror.

"Are you quite sure of that, Madam," said Sydney, with a faint smile; "are words always necessary to reveal people's thoughts? Do more justice to your eyes

and countenance ; their language is too intelligible ever to be mistaken."

Emma blushed ; and, to turn off the conversation, she asked Sydney when he came to town ?

" Only last night, Madam."

At that instant it struck Emma, that then assuredly it was him who she had heard repeat her name as she was getting into the hackney-coach ; and she was shocked to think of the odd surmises, that must have occurred to him, upon seeing her in such a strange situation. She had not, however, the courage to mention the subject ; and Sydney, finding her silent, observed, it had been a dreadful wet night. This required no answer, and he continued—" there was scarcely a possibility of getting a coach."—Emma knew this to be too true."

" Wea-

“ Weather, however, is a circumstance,” said he, glancing a look at her, “ to which, perhaps, you, Madam, pay little attention.”

Emma could not misunderstand his meaning—“ I am not fond,” said she, very gravely, “ of going out in bad weather.”

“ Indeed!—of course then my eyes deceived me, and you were not out on foot last night.”

“ Pardon me, Sir,” said Emma, angrily, “ I was, as you saw, out: an unforeseen accident”

Here she was interrupted by Peter’s bouncing into the room, screaming out Lord Peppermint; and the Marquis, laughing immoderately, close at his heels.

Emma, astonished, delighted, yet confused, started up; half an exclamation escaped her lips, but, recovering herself, she resumed her seat.

Lord Miramont, attributing the pallid hue of her cheeks to indisposition, hastened to enquire after her health; and poor Sydney, inconceivably vexed at his entrance, looked the image of despair.

Emma, with a soft smile, thanked the Marquis for his enquiry, and said she was somewhat indisposed with a cold; but she could not say this without blushing, as Sydney's looks clearly expressed that he thought it no wonder.

Lord Miramont, who had yet scarcely noticed him, having only had eyes for Emma, now shook him cordially by the hand; a ceremony to which Sydney yielded with secret reluctance; and taciturn

turn as he had been before, he became still more so now.

The conversation was, indeed, constrained on all sides ; for both the Marquis and Emma wished to talk over the events of the foregoing evening, which neither thought proper to do before Sydney ; and the latter, though sensible that his company was by no means desired, could not, however, prevail upon himself to depart. He sat still, therefore, miserable, jealous, and disappointed ; for Emma seemed inclined, before Lord Miramont arrived so *mal-à-propos*, to repose in him a degree of confidence, that would have soothed his sufferings ; the few words which had dropped from her, made him very impatient to hear what would have followed, which he had now no chance of learning, or of obtaining the least share of her attention, as the Marquis, whom he persuaded himself to be his declared

rival, seemed immovably fixed by her side.

At length Sydney took his leave ; and Lord Miramont, immediately after he was gone, remarked to Emma, the strange change that a few weeks had wrought both in his person and manner, of which he was far from guessing the cause ; but, though *she* could not entirely account for the alteration, she could in some measure ; for she too well guessed the suspicions that disturbed his mind, and the jealousy, however groundless, that occasioned his coldness to the Marquis. The latter said he could not imagine what had become of him ; for that he had never seen him any where since the masquerade.

“ The masquerade ! ” repeated Emma ;
 “ why, he was out of town at that time.”

“ O, no !

“ O, no!—you are mistaken, I assure you; for I not only saw him there, but spoke to him.”

“ Are you quite sure, Lord Miramont, it was him?”

“ Positive; and he wore a black domino.”

This, however, did not remove a suspicion that had instantly arisen in Emma's mind, that the Conjuror had certainly been no other than Sydney; and she wondered that, in the course of their late conversation on this subject, it had not struck her before.

But Lord Miramont, to whom she imparted her supposition, without mentioning all her reasons for it, could neither confirm nor refute it; being, in this respect, in total ignorance himself. Emma, therefore, retained her own opinion, which

was supported by every semblance of probability.

Lord Miramont now told Emma many little circumstances relative to his enquiries the preceding night, which he had omitted in his letter; and, amongst others, the favourable impression he had taken of the Duchess and *Sidonie*, particularly of the latter, with whom he was quite charmed; and, after speaking of their lamentable situation with the greatest interest, he enquired whether Emma thought they would accept, from him, a small annuity, to relieve them from all apprehensions of future distress.

But Emma, though excessively delighted with his generosity, doubted that they would consent to profit by it: she well knew the delicacy of their sentiments, and their pride, and that nothing but urgent necessity had induced them to receive, what she had had the pleasure
of

of procuring them, by her application to her friends.—She mentioned, therefore her doubts to Lord Miramont; adding, that since they received, in common with other emigrants, assistance from Government, they had often expressed great satisfaction that they need never again be troublesome to individuals, whose favours, henceforth, they should resolutely decline; and that *Sidonie* absolutely gloried in providing for the subsistence of her children by her needle work, which she sold at the Repository, and that no arguments could induce her to discontinue this laborious employment. However, not to thwart Lord Miramont's benevolent purpose, Emma said she would found them upon it.

They then entered into a lively conversation on indifferent matters; and, at his request, she consented to play to him on the piano forte, which she did with infinite taste. He had never before heard

her; as, at Lady Wilmington's, where he chiefly saw her, the Ladies Fontelieu were the only persons whose talents were ever mentioned: hence his surprise and pleasure were very great, when he found Emma so excellent a musician.

She had just finished playing, when Mrs. Mourtray came home, who was rather more amazed than her daughter at Lord Miramont's visit; which, having now been prolonged to an unusual length, he concluded, leaving Emma happier than she had almost ever felt before; not that she had been able, from any look or word of Lord Miramont's, to draw any inference favourable to her wishes; yet, as it was certain that he seemed pleased in her company, and that he regarded her with no common degree of interest, she fondly hoped this, in time, might acquire still greater force; and, in the mean while, so far from trying to conquer her partiality, she resolved, secretly,

cretly, to indulge it, and never to bestow a thought upon any other man.

“ And, pray,” said Mrs. Mourtray, as soon as the Marquis was gone; “ and, pray, what brought hither that gay young man?—and how came you to receive him during my absence?”

Emma became like scarlet, and could not answer without a faltering voice:—“ I fancy, Mamma,” said she, “ his politeness induced him to come to enquire how I did, after being so wet last night; and, as to his admittance, that was Peter’s fault, who makes such shocking blunders with people’s names as I am ashamed to hear.”

“ Well, well:—that can’t be helped, and must be so, if your father will persist in keeping such country bumpkins.—However, it is not proper, Emma, that you should receive visits from men; for

Sydney, too, I find, has been here ; unless, indeed, from such a respectable man as Mr. Chowles. But I am quite astonished that Lord Miramont, who is reckoned so very ill-bred, should, all at once, become so uncommonly polite."

" Ah !" thought Emma :—" I hope he is something more."

The next morning Emma, being tolerably recovered of her cold, timidly requested her mother to permit her to call upon the emigrants ; for she felt uneasy at what the Marquis had hinted, concerning the Duke's alarm at the story of the forged note.—At first Mrs. Mourtray peremptorily refused ; but seeing her daughter look unhappy, she had not the courage to persevere in her denial ; therefore, after stipulating that she should not stay above five minutes with these French *folks*, she consented ; and, in order to keep her strictly to her promise, she waited

waited herself in the carriage whilst Emma went up to them.

The latter found *Sidonie* hard at work, though in a state of convalescence: she had been very ill, and was still weak and pale; yet so delighted to see her *belle amie* (as she called Emma) that her fine eyes acquired a transient brilliancy; while, with all the volubility of her nation, to which she had given loose since she had become more acquainted with Emma, she enquired if the author of the note had been discovered; mentioning, at the same time, the strange *chimeres* (as she called them) which the circumstance had put into her father-in-law's head.

Emma could give her no information on this point: the suspicions she entertained were not of a nature to be communicated; and she hastened to treat the
matter

matter as a foolish trick that had been played her, not worth attention.

Sidonie then enquired what *Seigneur* had lately honoured her family with a visit, "*c'est un homme superbe,*" added she, "and with a most noble mind; for, though we were perfect strangers to him, his behaviour was marked with that delicate respect and attention, which, probably, he thought due to our misfortunes. Do tell me his name?"

Emma felt a blush wavering on her cheek all the while *Sidonie* spoke:—to hear Lord Miramont commended always gave her a delicious sensation; and she satisfied her friend's curiosity, but as concisely as possible, being afraid to exhaust her mother's patience, if once she entered upon such a subject; therefore she hastened to take leave.

CHAP. X.

NEITHER Sydney's good sense, nor Emma's insensibility, could cure him of a hopeless passion. When Fitzaubert had earnestly pressed him to make him a visit, at Canterbury, he had, just at that time, frequent opportunities of seeing his beloved Emma, in consequence of Mrs. Mourtray's confinement: from day to day, therefore, he had deferred his journey; till, hearing his brother was ill, his good nature decided his departure, and he intended leaving town the day of the masquerade.

But, on his return to his lodgings at night, after he had taken leave of the Mourtrays, and left Emma in transports with her tickets, the first object he beheld in his apartment was Fitzaubert himself,
whom

whom he had imagined ill, and confined to his bed :—" You may well be astonished to see me," said he ; " but a change in my affairs has brought me to town. In the first place, two or three people have been so obliging to die lately in the regiment, and thus I have got a lift : this gave me a pretext of business here, for which I obtained leave of absence : and, secondly, the most important part of my business is to go to the masquerade."

" And your illness," said Sydney, " which alarmed me so much, what is become of that ?"

" O ! that was soon dispatched, as it never seriously existed : I only wanted to get you with me."

" You are very obliging," said Sydney ; " but another time, when you may really want me, I may distrust this being the case,

case. But, surely you have some better reason for coming to town, than to go to a masquerade?"

"No; that is my chief motive.— I happen (though I have been so shamefully kept out of the world) to be well acquainted with the Lady who gives it, for she lived very near the Clergyman who had the care of me; so I ventured to write to her, and here is her answer," said Fitzaubert, producing two tickets; "for I asked for two; therefore there is one for each of us."

Sydney would not refuse his brother's gift, proposing to himself some pleasure in seeing Emma; unknown to herself; and, indifferent as to his disguise, he left that matter to Fitzaubert, who procured two dresses; that of a Conjuror for himself, and a domino; stipulating, that when he should grow tired of his part, which might very likely happen, as he
knew

knew very few people, that they should change dresses.

As a domino, therefore, Sydney, who had but one object in view, first saw Emma engaged in conversation with a Turk; and deceived, like herself, by his height and figure, he fully believed him to be the Marquis.

But while he stood with his arms folded, contemplating these masks, and suffering all the pangs of jealousy, he was suddenly startled by a smart slap on the shoulder, given him by a blue domino; who, calling him by his name, asked, laughing, the subject of his reverie.

The voice Sydney instantly recognized to be Lord Miramont's, whom he begged, since he had discovered, not to betray him to others, which the Marquis readily promised: and now the former felt his heart lightened of half its troubles;

bles ; but still he was uneasy at the Turk's affiduities, and very curious to know who he was ; not without suspecting, that Emma's patience in attending to him, arose from her being under the same mistake, as that from which he had just been undeceived.

He was very glad, however, when he saw her, abruptly, quit this mysterious person ; whom he resolved, at all events, to discover, as his air and superb dress gave him the appearance, of a very formidable rival.

He, therefore, constantly kept his eye upon him ; and observed, that, without speaking to any other mask, the Turk seemed to have no wish but to escape as fast as he could :—" His business, then," thought Sydney, " was with Emma alone !"—and this notion redoubled his curiosity.

The

The Turk, having no suspicion he was watched, did not take much pains, when he was got into the hall amongst the servants, to disguise his voice: by this negligence, and his telling the chairmen to set him down in Grosvenor Square, Sydney discovered, to his infinite amazement, in the Turk, that grave politician, the Earl of Wilmington!

Soon after his departure, Fitzaubert, heartily tired of the character he had undertaken, and could not support, reminded his brother of their agreement, who consented to change dresses with him. The cap and the high-heeled shoes belonging to that of the Conjuror, completely disguised him.

It was, therefore, very easy to Sydney, who lived in the world, to tell the fortunes of those persons he knew, and he talked a jargon that often admitted of a double signification. When Emma appeared,

peared, the observation he had made on Lord Miramont's character, and on her sentiments for him, furnished his first sketch. Chowles was, in his eyes, a contemptible object; and, as such, he depicted him.

The Earl's loose morals, and late mysterious conversation with Emma, gave him no doubt of his iniquitous views; but, though he drew a rough outline of him, he had no serious apprehensions of such an old profligate.

The delicacy of his own sentiments had constantly, hitherto, sealed his lips; but if, in this figurative manner, he could impress Emma's mind with even a faint idea that there existed a man, who, in silence, humbly adored her, he had hopes that she would recognize, in this image, the unhappy Sydney.

The

The severity with which he had afterwards treated Chowles was occasioned by some traits of his character that had lately come to his knowledge, owing to the following circumstance.

A respectable Merchant, of the name of Newton, had lived in habits of great intimacy with his father, and ever since his death had shewn the greatest friendship and kindness to himself; who held him in the highest esteem, though their different ages and pursuits, prevented very frequent communication between them.

Every now and then, however, Sydney passed a day at Hendon, with Mr. Newton and his wife; a very worthy woman, whom he considered in a sort of maternal light.—It happened, that the day after he had dined with Chowles, he went to spend a day with the Newtons, whom he found surrounded with their children, and

and Mr. Cheveley, a very old man, (Mrs. Newton's father,) who resided with them.

By some chance, after dinner, in the course of conversation, Sydney mentioned the name of Chowles, when, to his great surprize, old Cheveley lifted up his hands and eyes with an expression of horror, for which Sydney knew not how to account, as he was a man of a remarkable mild temper; and Mr. Newton, who guessed what was passing in his mind, made him a sign, which he perfectly understood, to drop the subject.

But, as soon as he was alone with Sydney, he explained the cause of Cheveley's behaviour, in a manner that entirely removed the astonishment it had created.

His story was long, but the matter may be comprised in a few words;—Old
Cheveley,

Cheveley, who had once been a very capital merchant, moved with compassion at the destitute condition of Chowles, had taken him, when a boy, into his counting-house; and afterwards, at his sole expence, placed him in a commercial line in the West-Indies; laying thereby the foundation of his future enormous fortune.

Chowles, in the course of a few years, became sufficiently rich to want no longer the assistance of his benefactor, who, likewise, went on very prosperously himself, till just before Chowles arrived to settle in England, to enjoy, and to add, by fresh undertakings, to the wealth he had already accumulated.

But at this period, Cheveley, by various accidents, unnecessary to detail, but in which no fault was imputable to him, seemed in great danger of a bankruptcy.—Newton had, indeed, the will, but not the

the means, of serving him effectually: however, in the midst of Cheveley's embarrassments, his uneasiness was lessened by the certainty with which he assured himself of the active friendship of a man, to whom he had been quite a father; and he considered Chowles's arrival in England, at this juncture, absolutely as providential.

How great, therefore, was his astonishment, when, after much shuffling, and innumerable delays, even to hear any thing of his affairs, Chowles absolutely refused—not to lend him money, for that he did not ask, but—to become his security with persons who, upon that condition, would allow him time to arrange his concerns, which he was certain, by this indulgence, he should be enabled to do in the most satisfactory manner to all his creditors.

Chowles, not in the least moved by the distress of his benefactor, remaining inflexible, the old man sold every thing he possessed, honestly paid all that he owed, and, reserving nothing for himself but a very small annuity, he gave up house-keeping, and sought an asylum with the Newtons; where he was treated with such tenderness, as made him almost forget his misfortunes.

During the days of old Cheveley's prosperity, he had been fond of collecting pictures, and he had two, remarkably fine, that Chowles coveted extremely; and the former, who foresaw that he should be obliged to part with them, offered them to him at a price much below their value; this was whilst he was uncertain what part Chowles would take in his affairs: the latter, however, refused to purchase them, pretending he had discovered them to be only copies.

After-

Afterwards, when all poor Cheveley's effects were sold, these pictures fell into the hands of an auctioneer, when Chowles, who had pretended to despise them, was not ashamed to buy them at an enormous price !

Mr. Newton also told Sydney, that, rich as was this man, his griping avarice engaged him into such extensive schemes and speculations, that, if any reverse of fortune were to befall him, it would not be a matter of surprize to any person well acquainted with his secret history.

From *these hints* Sydney spake: and, as nothing is so grating to an evil conscience as truth, no wonder that the representations in the magical mirror enraged Chowles almost to madness.

Sydney, soon after the masquerade, accompanied his brother into the country ; for, as he did not wish to acknowledge

the part he had acted there, though his views had been irreprehensible, and to put Emma upon her guard was his chief object, yet he judged it better to keep out of the way for some weeks.

On his return, just after he had left his horse at the stables, the first object he saw (and he thought his eyes deceived him) was Emma; her wet clothes clinging to her, handing into a hackney coach by Lord Miramont!—Almost out of his senses, he followed as fast as he could, not to lose sight of the coach; and, as it crept along at a very slow rate, he had, at least, the comfort of tracing it to Wimpole Street. Then he went to his lodgings, filled with every unpleasant sensation that can torment a heart, in which love, hatred, doubt, and jealousy, contend with each other.

His first determination was, never more to think of Emma; but the next day, he

could

could not resist calling upon her, to see whether she would deign to explain the phenomenon he had witnessed.—He endeavoured to appear calm, but it was not in his power to disguise his misery; and the disappointment occasioned by Lord Miramont's abrupt entrance, has already been related.

Mr. Mourtray, after spending a week at Downton, returned to town much dissatisfied with the little progress the workmen had made in the repairs of his house, which certainly would not be habitable, at soonest, under six weeks: he was alarmed at the expensive mode of proceeding of the conceited fellow patronized by Chowles; whom, nevertheless, he was too indolent to dismiss, ignorant how he should replace him.

Both the ladies were secretly pleased that they should be kept in town so long. They had agreed not to mention a syllable,

ble, either to him or Henry, of Emma's extraordinary adventure; for, though Mrs. Mourtray did not see Lord Wilmington's conduct in the same light as did her daughter, she thought it not improbable her son and husband might; and she well knew that the latter, with all his coolness, was very nice and punctilious in his notions of honour.

Henry, who inherited the same sentiments, without the slightest notion of prudence, was, moreover, of so violent and inflammable a temper, that half a word was sufficient, at any time, to set his blood boiling.

Emma, who possessed a superior share of penetration, had still more dread than her mother of their knowing a transaction, which she was certain would involve them in a very serious quarrel.

The

The day after Mourtray's arrival, Henry came flying into the drawing-room to his mother and sister:—"Joy! joy!" cried he, "I am the luckiest, happiest fellow on earth!—the dear creature will be mine!—Ay, you may both stare, but, by Jove, I am not *humming* you; it is a literal fact—all settled by old Silbourne himself."

"What is all this?—Are you gone mad, Henry?" asked Mrs. Mourtray.

"Why, if being curfedly happy makes a man mad, for aught I know, I may be so."

"What a strange expression!" exclaimed Emma.

"Nonsense," cried Henry: "Who that is promised such an angel as Selina, and 5000*l.* a year, can be calm."

“ And have you, really, hopes of all this?” asked Mrs. Mourtray.

“ Hopes! Certainty, I tell you, Madam: and, if you will listen patiently, you shall hear all that has passed.---You know I have been playing the *inamorato* for these two months . . . ”

“ Ah! Henry,” interrupted Emma, “ I fear you feigned more than you felt.---Miss Silbourne’s fortune”

“ Hold!” cried Henry, warmly; “ I know not why you should suppose any such thing. Selina is one of the loveliest creatures in the world; and, if she had not a sixpence, I vow to God I should love her just as well: but her being heir to so large a fortune, is, to be sure, *tant mieux*.---Now, if you choose to listen, without breaking the thread of my story, I will go on; otherwise not.”

After

After a moment's pause, he proceeded.---
 "You well know that my whole thoughts have been, for some time, engrossed by Selina. Sometimes I hoped, then again I feared; one day I was elated, the next suddenly depressed; and in this fluctuating state I continued; never, however, relaxing in my *devoirs*, and in these surpassing all my rivals, whom I could with pleasure have hewn to pieces. Yet, still, I was very uncertain how this business would end.

"Old Silbourne, however, who could not fail of seeing my views, did not absolutely discourage them; this I thought a good sign; but, whenever I took courage, and sought for an opportunity of avowing them, he always found some pretence to get away.

"You may imagine I had already explained myself to Selina;—though, with her, I had all those difficulties to en-

counter which arise from excessive shyness and timidity : but the dear little soul's countenance, in despite of her reserve, discovered to me that I was not indifferent to her ; and, at length, I drew from her a sort of half-permission to speak to her father.

“ For this purpose, I accompanied them home from Kensington Gardens this morning, and Selina having slipped away, I stammered out something like a proposal, but in a strange abrupt way ; and, I believe, I looked d d foolish : for Silbourne could not refrain from laughing, serious as was the subject.

“ If I had been cool and unconcerned, perhaps I might have found ample matter for laughter in the studied speech he made in answer ; but I was in a fright, and stood like a school-boy trembling before his master.”

“ Well,

“ Well, and so, Mr. Henry Mourtray,” said he, “ you give me to understand, that you are in love with my girl ;—this does not surprize me, for though I say it, who should not, Selina is a pretty and a good girl, and will have, some of these days, sufficient to live comfortably,—ay, and handsomely, too ; but, then, there must be a little prudence.—Now, mark me, Mr. Henry Mourtray, without this said old-fashioned virtue, which you young men are apt to hold cheap, no fortune will suffice : for, if people are always striving to outshine others, and to cut a dash, and such like,—why, the end is neither more nor less than ruin.

“ Now I am, myself, a plain country gentleman, quite free from ambition, independent in fortune and principles : but if, like a fool, I had attempted to vie with my superiors, and, because one man did *this*, that truly I must do *that*,—why, then, the upshot would have been, that

L 6

I should

I should have run out ; and, to patch up things, I must have gone sneaking and cringing to ministers ; and, for the sake of some paltry place, have said *Yes*, when, perhaps, I ought to have said *No*.

“ But now to the point in question:—Understand, Mr. Henry Mourtray, that Selina being my only treasure, and I perfectly sensible of her value, I shall therefore never bestow her but on such a man, as I am convinced will make her happy.

“ I have had many serious cogitations with myself on this subject, and the result of them is this—My son-in-law must have sound religious and moral principles ; good blood in his veins ; for, mark me, I have great faith in blood ; *that* which has been transmitted pure from a long race of honourable men, seldom degenerates.—Titles are, to me, quite a matter of indifference, being chiefly sound.—Fortune is essential to be on one
side

fide or the other, but Selina need not seek it.—Comeliness of person is desirable, for it is a gift of Providence, and bespeaks good will.

“ Now, I will tell you fairly, Mr. Henry Mourtray, how far I think you answer to my conditions:—your education, and what I have seen of your disposition, give me hopes that you are unobjectionable as to the first article; and, in regard to the second, it does not admit of a doubt; as no family is more respectable than your’s. My sentiments I have already explained concerning titles and fortune: and I believe,” said he, smiling, “ you have no great apprehensions of any deficiency in personal perfections. Therefore, I have but” —Here I, somewhat impetuously, exclaimed, “ My God! Sir, why this *but*?”—

“ Gently, young man, gently; hear me out: I say, then, having no other objection

jection to you than the shortness of our acquaintance, which has not allowed me sufficient time to investigate your character fully, I must have leisure to do this before I give you Selina: for, should I find that you have a propensity for play, which has been whispered to me lately, though I do not believe it," (Here I was very near rapping out an oath, but I checked myself, and he proceeded)—“why, then, assuredly, if you play, you shall not be my son-in-law.”

“And, pray, Sir, will you be so good,” said I, affecting mildness, “to tell me whom I have to thank, for the information that was whispered to you?”

“No matter; it is, however, in your power to refute the accusation by your conduct: for if, during the course of one twelvemonth” “A twelvemonth!” cried I, gasping for breath: “why, good God!

God! Sir, you may as well talk of a century!"

"What, again you interrupt me!" cried he: "however, you are young, impetuous, and in love; so I will pass it over once more. But now, mark me, if you comport yourself discreetly during this probation, which upon no account will I consent to shorten, because I choose to observe you during the trial of a London winter; which, if you pass through happily, then Selina shall be your's."

"But you must submit to my own conditions:—These are, Mr. Henry Mourtray,—when you are not on regimental duty, to live all the summer with me, and be decorous in my family, which is a very regular one; for I would as soon admit a man infected with the plague, as one of your men of the *ton*:—mark that. In town, I shall allow you wherewithal to have a good house of your own; for
my

my purse is tolerably heavy. But I shall have a sharp eye upon you, and if I hear of any irregularities, you shall not, hereafter, command a sixpence of my fortune, which I shall keep unsettled, as a check upon you.

“ Now I have done : ” --- (God be praised! thought I) — “ if you choose to submit to my terms, and your parents sanction your choice, why, then, this affair is concluded : for I well know that Selina regards you favourably.”

“ You may easily believe,” continued Henry, “ that I swore and protested submission to these cursed conditions, which I secretly execrated : but I would have undertaken all the labours of Hercules, had he required them, to secure Selina.— The only point I contested was, the abominable probation, but I could not get him to shorten it; however, I hope Lady Bingfield will stand my friend in this,
and

and she has great influence with her brother.

“He would not let me see Selina then; but I am to drink tea with her this evening, and you shall hear what passes.”

Mr. Mourtray, not returning to dinner, was yet ignorant of the happy event which gave such delight to his family, and was the sole subject of their conversation, till Henry went, in high spirits, to fulfil his engagement.

CHAP. XL

MOURTRAY, who had been detained out the whole day on business, returned home early in the evening, and heard, with agreeable surprize, from Mrs. Mourtray, the fair prospect that had opened to his son.

Mr. Silbourne, in his opinion, had acted very nobly; for, with such a fortune as he possessed, he might naturally have expected, for his lovely daughter, a match infinitely superior than Henry could possibly be; and, so far from thinking the stipulations he made at all severe, to him they appeared very reasonable; and such as any prudent father, where the happiness of a daughter was at stake, had a right to exact from a young man, just turned of twenty-one,

light

light and volatile in disposition, as was Henry.

The latter came home soon after his father, who congratulated him on the pleasing event he had just learned; at the same time, hinting some apprehensions that it might yet be blasted by his own imprudence.

Emma, though she did not acknowledge them, had the same fears; for she knew the wildness and impetuosity of Henry's passions; but Mrs. Mourtray did not conceive it possible that he should fail of passing triumphantly through the trial; which, nevertheless, she thought Silbourne had been too rigorous in imposing upon him.

Impatient to hear what had passed in his last interview with the Silbournes, she eagerly enquired, particularly, what Selina said.

“ Say,”

“ Say,” cried Henry, “ what could she say? She blushed and smiled as soon as she saw me, which was all I could expect from her.—But the old man had the conscience to *bore* me again, with much such another harangue as that he gave me in the morning; saying, he meant it for his daughter’s edification, as well as mine.”

“ And Lady Bingfield,” said Mrs. Mourtray: “ did she intercede for you, concerning the probation?”

“ Why, indirectly she did; by very generously saying, she had so good an opinion of my honour, as to believe it quite unnecessary. And sweet Selina added, with her eyes cast down, that she never could entertain a doubt to my disadvantage.”

“ Amiable girl!” cried Emma: “ it is impossible, Henry, you should ever give
her

her cause to repent her confidence in you."

"I do not intend it; for I mean to be so prettily behaved, as to become the darling of all the old, sober, stupid folks in the kingdom:" and then, lowering his voice, and turning towards Emma, he added,—“But I have hopes, however, that Silbourne will shorten the time, when this cursed restraint shall no longer be necessary.”

Emma shook her head, but made no answer. After supper, when Mourtray found himself alone with his son, that he might have nothing to reproach himself with, he seized this favourable moment, when Henry, elated with his success, was in high good humour, to represent seriously to him the absolute necessity of a total change of conduct; not only as his obtaining Miss Silbourne's hand depended upon it, but also, on account of the situation

tion of his own affairs, which, he said, (to Henry's astonishment,) were by no means in a condition to support him in the extravagant style he had adopted since he left Oxford.

His remonstrances were so mild, and delivered with such paternal tenderness, that Henry (though in general ill-disposed to attend to what he called lectures) lent him an attentive ear, and for the moment was sincere; when he assured him, that he was resolved, as he termed it, to take up.

Mourtray, who had never found him so patient or reasonable before, began to think Love had operated a miracle in him, and blessed the chance which had thrown Miss Silbourne in his way.

The next morning he called upon her father, to whom he warmly expressed his gratitude for his conduct to his son, and
his

his entire approbation of the conditions he had proposed.

A long and confidential conversation now took place between the fathers.—Silbourne, in very prolix language, detailed the plan he had formed for the establishment of his daughter, which he was pleased to find would meet with Mourtray's hearty concurrence, whenever it could be put into execution.

The latter candidly laid open the state of his affairs, his embarrassments, and expectations; mentioning what he should, at all events, settle on his son, which perfectly satisfied the former; who shewed so much honour, honesty, and liberality in his sentiments, with such an ardent desire to promote his daughter's happiness, that Mourtray felt no inclination to condemn some of his notions as old-fashioned and absurd, because they were
not

not conformable to the manners of the present age.

Having been allowed to make his bow to Selina, who received him with more apparent joy than ever she had dared to shew his son, he departed; leaving Silbourne exceedingly satisfied with him; and confirmed in his idea of the stress that ought, in marriage, to be laid on blood; as likewise, that there should be in this connexion, as nearly as possible, a conformity of persons, ages, and conditions. Arguing from this principle, he always had reprobated some schemes his sister had tried to make him adopt; especially that of seeking amongst the peerage a husband for his daughter.

Not that he would have been so absurd as to refuse a very worthy man, merely because he was of superior rank to himself; but, granting merit to be equal,

equal, he would have preferred the Commoner to the Peer. Without being parsimonious, he shunned ostentation; and being perfectly content (strange as this may sound) with that portion of wealth that had fallen to his share, he had ever secretly wished that Selina's choice might fix on a man, to whom no objection could be made, but *that* which, in his eyes, was none—inferiority of fortune.

With a person thus circumstanced, he thought he might, with better grace, make those terms he mentioned to Henry; and though in these, doubtless, he had his daughter's advantage in view, he was not unmindful of his own; for, by securing the young people's residence with him in the country, he flattered himself he should feel less sensibly the difference of Selina's being married; and even gain, in her husband, an additional companion to smooth the joyless period of declining age.

From Mr. Silbourne's, Mourtray went to see Lady Bingfield, who received him with the old-fashioned civility of former times; expressing, what she really felt, much satisfaction at the projected alliance between the families.

This Lady was both old and plain, consequently often neglected by young people: the trifling service, therefore, that Henry had had the good fortune to do her at the play, which few people even would have remembered, had won him her good graces.

Both her character and understanding were excellent, and her sentiments noble and generous; often to the great inconvenience of her very limited fortune.—Originally she had been rich, and enjoyed a large income, till an advanced period of her life; when, on marrying, her fortune was engulfed in that of her husband, Sir Charles Bingfield, never to return

turn to her, but through so narrow a channel after his death, as scarcely to leave her sufficient to maintain the dignity of her station; yet still her mind retained its native generosity; and, while necessity taught her to bend her attention to domestic concerns, her ingenuity gave, even to frugality, the semblance of elegance.

Somewhat formal and precise in her manners, at first her appearance was rather chilling; but, to those she liked, her behaviour was warm and hearty.—Violent and irascible in her passions, she loved or hated; was tender, or furious; always in extremes.

The Mourtrays, naturally being very desirous of cultivating an intimacy with the Silbournes, invited them to dine and pass a day at their house; and Mourtray, who had lately often complained, that he now seldom saw his favourite, Sydney,

went himself to request, that he would add his company to this family party.

Poor Sydney, who had never seen Emma since that fatal day that had occasioned him so many pangs, had been persuading himself that he ought to forget, and consequently avoided every opportunity of seeing her. But his resolution was not proof against the cordiality of Mourtray's invitation; and the first glance of Emma's bright eyes dissolved the case of ice, with which he fancied he had encrusted his heart.

As he sat next to her at dinner, he enjoyed more of her conversation than others did; and afterwards, in the drawing-room, he was not a little delighted, as well as surprized, when, being at a little distance from the rest of the company, she said, blushing:—"When last we met, Mr. Sydney, I observed, with pain, that you had received an unfavourable

able impression of me, from a circumstance, which, doubtless, had a very singular appearance; yet it was accidental; and though I have reasons for declining to explain it, they are none that I need be ashamed of. Conscious of this, I think well enough of you to believe, that, relying on my assertion, you will candidly acquit me of any *supposed* indiscretion."

"Ah! Madam," cried Sydney, "how can I possibly doubt the truth of words, confirmed by such an ingenuous countenance?—But, whilst I admire your condescension, in recurring to a subject I dared not mention, I must confess how unworthy I am of your good opinion: far from being candid in my judgment I was, I am ashamed to own it but I cannot proceed; for I hate myself."

“ No, Mr. Sydney,” said Emma, “ you must not do that: few, I am afraid, appearances being so much against me, would have judged favourably of me; and, perhaps, not many would so generously acknowledge their error, as you have done, or shew such implicit faith in my veracity.”

“ Oh!—this goodness kills me!—can you forgive me; can you be so very generous?”

“ It will be no act of generosity.—Indeed, excepting just for half a minute, I never was angry with you; so, you see, you have long been forgiven.”

“ Since you are in this gracious humour,” said Sydney, smiling, “ I am tempted to confess more of my sins, humbly hoping to receive a full absolution for them, in the lump.”

“ I know

“ I know not that I shall stay to hear your confession : perhaps, indeed, it is unnecessary, as I may already know what you are about to own.”

“ Discovered to you by Lord Miramont,” said Sydney, eagerly :—“ Was it not so, Miss Mourtray ?”

“ Why need *you*, Mr. Sydney,” replied Emma, smiling, “ ask this ; since the past, the present, and the future, it seems, is known to you ?”

“ Would to God !” cried Sydney, with a sigh, “ that it were so : then, possibly, I should be relieved from the dread of a misery, which, of late, I have considered as too certain.”

But Emma, apprehensive that Sydney, whose heart seemed on his lips, would speak explicitly on a subject she did not wish to hear, now abruptly left him ;

yet he remained much less unhappy, and greatly consoled, by this short dialogue, during which she had behaved with the most captivating sweetness; and she was reinstated, more firmly than ever, in his esteem.

While Henry was busily engaged in making love, the rest of the company amused themselves very well in conversing on a variety of topics; and, with Mrs. Mourtray alone, the evening passed on heavily. Though Lady Bingfield tried to adapt, to the level of her understanding, the subjects of her conversation, yet, as she knew little of common gossip, and was not fond of cards, which Mrs. Mourtray thought one of the indispensable comforts of life, the latter insensibly yawned herself into an intermediate state between sleeping and waking, gently lulled by the distant murmur of a discussion on politics, between her husband and Silbourne, when she was suddenly roused

roused by a violent rap at the door; and, presently after, Mr. and Mrs. Prouting, and Chowles, were announced.

Full dressed for an assembly, Mrs. Prouting's cheeks were quite in a blaze, being of the colour of a new brick wall: she had changed her Brutus for a flaxen wig, which was surmounted by three unruly yellow feathers, that waved every way but the right; and her thick person was so attired, as to give undeniable proofs that *she*, at least, had no occasion for those ingenious contrivances, which cheat the eye with an artificial *embonpoint*.

This singular figure, affecting a light careless air, seated herself on the sofa, by Mrs. Mourtray; who, though she had no affection for her, felt her spirits wonderfully exhilarated by her arrival; for she could tell who and who were together, at the last opera; how people were

M 5 dressed,

ressed, and other matters of equal importance: she could likewise fabricate anecdotes, greedily swallowed by auditors of Mrs. Mourtray's description.

"O, la!" exclaimed Mrs. Prouting, "have you heard what a pretty piece of work there has been at the Wilmington's?"

"Not a word," eagerly returned Mrs. Mourtray.

"O! then, let me tell it you before I go!—You must know I was rather surprized to see only Lady Wilmington, and her haughty daughter, Lady Elizabeth, at the opera last night, when Jack Manders told me that Lady Bell was shut up, actually confined to her room, on bread and water."

"Wherefore?"

"Because

“ Because she has been detected in a shameful intrigue with Captain Darnford. I own I was not at all amazed ; for I always thought her a bold flirt, and many people think she did not dress in such a loose style for nothing : however, be that as it may, Lady Wilmington looked crosser than ever ; and Lady Elizabeth, as stiff as a poker, sat with her mouth pursed up, vexed to death, that not one man came near the box the whole night.”

“ Not even Lord Miramont ? ”

“ No ; and, for a miracle, he did not attend Lady Fredville, as usual.—’Tis reported that her little Lord has worked himself up, at last, to find amiss that the Marquis should always be dangling after her, and he chose to stick close to her all the night, so she looked the image of Despair ; and Lord Miramont, instead of being disconsolate, seemed quite uncon-
M 6 cerned,

cerned, and amused himself with any body who came in his way."

Emma, for some time, had lent an attentive ear : the possibility of a rupture between the Marquis and Lady Fredville made her heart bound with hope and delight, till, unfortunately, she recollected how little Mrs. Prouting's tattle was to be credited.

At that instant this gossip, turning towards Emma, said, " Pray, Miss Mourtray, do you often indulge yourself, these spring evenings, with walking in the streets?"

" Most undoubtedly not, Madam !"

" Nay, then, to be sure, I must have been mistaken ; yet I could have sworn that, about a week or ten days ago, I saw you, by the light of my servant's flambeau, leaning on Lord Miramont's
arm,

arm, in Bond Street: I was in my chair (because it was a very wet night) going to a party, in Brook Street."

Emma's colour forsook her cheeks: from the moment Mrs. Prouting began this speech, she actually trembled; for her veracity would not permit her to deny what her discretion was loath to own; and a side glance at Sydney convinced her his distress quite equalled her's; but Chowles relieved her from the embarrassment of answering.

"What stuff and nonsense is this?" cried he, angrily:—"a fine story, truly, are you trumping up!—make me believe it, if you can, that Miss Mourtray walks the streets, at night, with such a rake as Lord Miramont!"

"What I saw I will believe," said Mrs. Prouting; and the more offended, because

because having, by chance, told truth, nobody believed her.

“ You neither saw this, nor do you believe it,” retorted Chowles, with emphasis ; “ and I say, and will maintain it, to be impossible.”

And Mr. Prouting, finding the disputants were getting very warm, reminded his wife, that it was time to go to the assembly: she, therefore, flounced out of the room, followed by him, leaving Chowles behind.

Mrs. Mourtray, who knew the truth of the story, wisely pretended she had not heard a word of all this, and kept Lady Bingfield in conversation, to prevent her from hearing it.

After the departure of the Proutings, Chowles, who always tried to fasten himself upon any stranger, made an attempt
to

to prepossess Lady Bingfield in his favour, by a copious detail of all the valuable rarities in his possession; but she was so indifferent to every thing of the kind, and paid him so slight a share of attention, that he left her in disgust, to seek more complaisant auditors elsewhere; and, soon after, the company separated.

Lord Wilmington having met Mourtray in the street, soon after his return from Downton, instantly perceived, by the open serenity of his countenance, that nothing relative to his behaviour to Emma had transpired; and still being as desirous as ever to attach him to his interest, he sent an invitation to himself and family, and to the Silbourne's, to dine with him, upon hearing of the intended alliance between them.

Which invitation was accepted; but Emma positively determined not to be of this party, though Mrs. Mourtray, with
vehemence,

vehemence, combated her objections, saying how very singular it would appear, if she was not; protesting, that her dislike to Lord Wilmington was absurd, and grounded on suspicions she could not substantiate.

But she would not have carried her point, if she had not represented that her father would naturally seek to penetrate into the motive of her refusal; which, should he discover, all the evils they had apprehended would undoubtedly ensue.

Emma, therefore, conquered her reluctance, and consented to accompany her parents to Grosvenor Square.

Mrs. Mourtray, on their way thither, expressed much curiosity to see whether Lady Bell was actually confined to her chamber, as Mrs. Prouting had asserted; but, so far from this being the case, they
found

found her in the drawing-room, in high bloom, and particularly lively.

Lord Wilmington behaved just as usual to the Mourtrays, only with a degree of formality to Emma, much the same as he used to do in the country; and she took care never to look at, nor, indeed, to speak to him, but just at table, when she could not possibly avoid it.

She observed that Lady Bell's spirits rather flagged in her father's presence, who treated her with marked coldness. After dinner she took Emma apart, and told her, that she had been in a disagreeable scrape with her parents, owing to her having carelessly dropped a letter, from Darnford, in her mother's dressing-room; but, as she thought proper to affect contrition, she soon made her peace with her, though not with her father, who still continued sullen, notwithstanding she had made a sort of promise to break

break off all correspondence with Darnford.

“ Which you will keep, I hope,” said Emma, eagerly.

“ That’s as it may happen,” replied Lady Bell:—“ if they give me unrestrained liberty, and don’t set people to watch me, perhaps I may; but, if they teaze and contradict me, and that Darnford should again become pressing,—why then, you know, they must take the consequence.”

“ And pray, Lady Bell, have you considered what the consequence will be to you, if, in defiance of your parents, you are persuaded by Darnford to do the rash act you have often hinted?”

“ Why, I can’t say I trouble myself with many reflections on the future:
suffice

suffice it for me, to be amused with the present."

"O! what an unfortunate turn of mind!" exclaimed Emma; "and what misery are you preparing for yourself!"

"Not at all: I shall be just as happy, perhaps more so, than you prudent girls, who deny yourselves the gratifications within your reach, to grasp at shadows."

Emma, who perfectly understood the sly blow she meant to aim at her, made no other answer than, that there could be no real gratifications, unsupported by duty and principle.

Lady Bell affected to laugh at "her starch notions;" adding, that she should feel exquisite delight in outwitting her shrewd father; and that she should not care half so much for Darnford, were it not

not for the sake of opposition: "besides," said she, "there is something in intrigue and mystery, which gives a fillip to one's existence."

Emma was turning from her, with a degree of disgust that she did not attempt to conceal; but Lady Bell detained her, to ask, if she really thought it would be criminal in her to marry Darnford?

"Certainly," answered Emma; "because it would be in direct disobedience to your parents; and, excuse my saying, it would likewise be a great folly; because you are not ignorant of his character; but, even were that unexceptionable, you well know he has not the means of supporting you in that style of life to which your birth and rank give you a claim; nor conformably to your own habits and inclinations."

"I do

“ I do allow there is something of truth in what you say ; and, certainly, I should find a terrible change, as Captain Darnford’s wife, compared to my present situation ; but, as to his character, except loving a little too much wine, and having an itch for gaming, I believe it is good in the main.”

“ Good Heaven!—how can a man’s character be good in the main, whom you acknowledge to be addicted to two capital vices?”

“ Say, rather, fashionable errors ; and so very common amongst men, in a certain class of life, that one thinks nothing about them.”

“ O ! depend upon it, either of them, in a husband, would force thought upon you.”

“ Pshaw !

" Pshaw ! I would take care not to be annoyed by any thing I did not like ; for, you know, *I* mean to govern, and keep my husband in good order, I promise you."

" That may be beyond your power ; and, think what you risk ? But, I observe, your Ladyship evades answering me on the point of disobedience."

" O ! it is a very *naughty* thing, to be sure ; yet I am not clear, that parents have a right to oppose their children's inclinations in marriage."

" Undoubtedly they have ; and you have reason to believe, that Lord and Lady Wilmington only oppose your's, because they know indulgence would be ruin to you."

" No :—their opposition is merely because my choice falls upon a poor untitled

titled man ; but, if Darnford was a Peer, or a very rich Commoner, not a word would be said about his character."

Emma, secretly, was of the same opinion herself, as far as it related to the Earl ; but this she was too prudent to avow ; and, when she parted with Lady Bell, she reflected, with real concern, that a person, to whom she had been so long attached, should be so totally void of principle.

CHAP. XII.

ABOUT a fortnight now passed smoothly, during which time Emma occasionally saw Lord Miramont, who, without taking any great pains to seek, always seemed delighted when he met her: and he and Lady Fredville were no longer inseparable, for a degree of coldness apparently subsisted between them.

Sydney, as usual, was received on a friendly footing in the Mourtray family, where he was highly valued by its head; nor could Emma fail of acknowledging his worth, though she was careful to prevent him, from entertaining hopes, of her ever sharing those sentiments that, involuntarily, he often betrayed.

Of

Of course she saw a great deal of Lady Binglefield and Selina; the former inspired her with infinite esteem and respect; and the latter, with the tenderest affection; for, though Selina still retained a degree of reserve, which, frank and open as was Emma herself, she felt rather discouraging; yet she found her disposition so gentle and amiable, that she hoped, as their intimacy increased, all constraint would be banished between them.

Henry, in the mean while, lived full as much at Silbourne's house as at his father's: he seemed entirely to have forgotten his old haunts; and since the day that he had been promised Selina's hand, his conduct appeared perfectly regular.

Silbourne's partiality towards him daily increased; he even sometimes hinted, that it was not absolutely impossible, that he might shorten the term of his probation: and Selina, as far as was consistent

with her timid disposition, gave him every mark of regard and preference.

From so auspicious a beginning, the Mourtrays flattered themselves that the end would terminate as they could wish; and that their son's attachment would entirely correct him of all his errors and defects. His mother viewed with exultation the prosperous success, that, so early in life, her darling child had met with; and anticipated, in imagination, the delight she should feel in his very advantageous establishment.

With these gay hopes, and with their tempers in perfect harmony with each other, the Mourtray family, without any company, were sitting one day after dinner in social chat together, when a letter was delivered to Henry.—“No answer is required, Sir,” said Peter, as he left the room.

Just at that instant, Mrs. Mourtray was telling (what she thought) a very good story; and her son waited its conclusion to read his letter, but accidentally his eye glanced on the direction, upon which, he tore it open, and at the first words he saw, he involuntarily started; the colour forsook his cheeks, and, huddling it into his pocket, he bounced up, and rushed out of the parlour.

“God bless us!” cried Mrs. Mourtray, “what can that letter be? Did you mark Henry’s altered countenance?—There is something the matter, I am sure. Do, Mr. Mourtray, step and see after him.”

“How you do love to alarm yourself about nothing at all, my dear!” said Mourtray, who had, for a few minutes, been in one of his absent fits; inasmuch as not even to have noticed Peter’s entrance or exit, though he had been re-

called to himself by Henry's banging the door after him.

Mrs. Mourtray then told her daughter to go and see if any thing was the matter: but Mr. Mourtray prevented her. "Let her sit still," said he: "if Henry does not return soon, I will go to him myself."

So saying, he drew towards him the remains of a bottle of port, which he prepared leisurely to finish before he stirred. Mrs. Mourtray, who had not one particle of her husband's phlegm in her composition, sat jogging her knee, restless and uneasy, still urging him to move, or, at least, to suffer her.

But, while he was quietly assuring her he should go in an instant, a sudden bang of the hall door, made her exclaim—"There!—I'll be hanged if Henry is not gone out:" and up she sprang to fly after him, when, in her haste, she stumbled against

against a chair, and hurting her foot extremely, the pain she suffered forced her to sit down.

While Mourtray was busy in rubbing her foot, Emma was dispatched to see whether Henry was in the house, but he was not to be found.

“There—I told you so, Mr. Mourtray! I hope, now, you will believe me another time.—Henry gone! without our knowing any thing about the letter; and all by your slow ways!”

“Grant me patience!” exclaimed Mourtray. “How can any reasonable being worry herself thus about trifles?—Because Henry receives a letter, perhaps an official one on military business, and then goes out, chimerical apprehensions possess your brain, and you sprain your ankle to run wildly after him!”

“ Indeed, Papa,” said Emma, “ my brother turned as pale as death before he left the parlour ; and Peter says, the letter was brought by a chairman ; and that Henry looked as if he were crazy when he flew out of the house.”

“ Oh ! my God !” cried her mother, “ send after him this minute !—Do, my dear Mr. Mourtray, oblige me. I may, perhaps, appear very foolish ; but, upon my word, I am terrified out of my wits.”

The account given by his daughter made more impresson upon Mourtray than his wife’s fears ; which he had too often experienced to be the sole offspring of her imagination, to be much alarmed by them : but now, he consented to set out in search of his son, though whither to go he knew not.

Mr. Silbourne’s house was the first place that occurred to him ; there he
found

the family absent, just gone to Richmond, accompanied, as he heard, by Lady Bingfield.

Thence he went through Bond Street, down St. James's Street and Pall Mall, as far as Charing Cross; stopping at most of those places where officers in the Guards commonly resort, but without gaining any intelligence of Henry.

Quite fatigued, yet more perplexed than alarmed, he returned home; when, just as he had reached his door, he was overtaken by Sydney, whom he invited into the house, relating to him his fruitless search after his son, and the circumstances that had occasioned him to undertake it.

Sydney, with all that friendly warmth which characterized his disposition, offered instantly to seek Henry; assuring Mrs. Mourtray, with a smile, that if he
was

was above ground he should be found; and treating his absence lightly, as an accidental matter, he contrived tolerably to pacify her fears, as well as Emma's, who by this time had caught them from her mother.

"Well," said the latter, as soon as he was gone, "well, I really think Mr. Sydney is not half so ugly as he used to be!"

"When he returns with Henry," said Mourtray, smiling, "you will discover that he is become handsome."

Many hours now passed in a state of disagreeable suspense. At first Mourtray, affecting perfect composure, began a game at chess with Emma, but he made as many blunders as she did; then found fault with her play, and leaving the game unfinished, he started up, and paced the room. Next he went out into the street, then

then returned, and throwing himself into a chair, sat listening, in hopes every instant of hearing something of his son.

Mrs. Mourtray, who had originally been the most alarmed, sat some time after Sydney's departure in a sort of stupor; then became restless and easy by fits and starts, till, the clock striking twelve, she relapsed into greater agitation than ever; and believing something might be done of which her husband had not thought, she dispatched the servants, one after the other, to different places, to enquire after their young master.

Emma, equally alarmed, but endued with greater fortitude than her mother, shewed more apparent calmness; yet she harassed her mind with conjecturing what could have happened; and her knowledge of her brother's impetuous temper naturally suggested terrifying apprehensions.

At

At length, a violent ringing at the door-bell roused all three: in an instant they were in the hall, and, with difficulty, Mourtray prevented his wife from snatching out of his hand a letter, sent him by Sydney, which he prudently thought he had better run over before she and Emma saw it.

While he hastily glanced at the contents, Mrs. Mourtray clamorously insisted upon hearing them; and, as he found she suspected still worse news than he had to communicate, he read aloud what follows:

Half Moon Street, June 25th.
half past 12 o'clock.

My dear Sir,

“ I have only time to write a single line, to say Henry is safe, and with me; but I cannot disguise from you, that a very unfortunate affair in which he has been engaged, and that I cannot, with
prudence,

prudence, stay to relate, renders it absolutely necessary he should leave town without a moment's delay.—When this reaches you, he and I shall already be on our way to my cottage, whence I will write to you fully; but do not write to him till you have heard from me, and keep his abode a profound secret. In the mean while, rely upon my paying every attention to his safety and comfort.

“ JULIAN SYDNEY.”

“ God of heaven and earth!” exclaimed Mrs. Mourtray, “ what can all this mean?—What can be Sydney's motive for thus hurrying my son away?”

“ Doubtless, a good one,” replied Mourtray; “ but it is impossible for me to say more till I hear from him again.”

“ *Hear!* La! how composedly you talk! Something very terrible must have happened

happened!—Remember, I said so from the first, and you see, now, I was right.”

“ You argued then on mere conjecture,” said Mourtray; “ though, unfortunately, the event has proved that something is wrong.”

“ What scrape can Henry be got into?” said Mrs. Mourtray.

“ Perhaps he has unluckily contracted some debt,” said Emma, “ and is obliged to fly for fear of an arrest.”

Mourtray, who sat absorbed in thought, remained silent; while his wife, catching at this idea, said, she hoped it would prove nothing worse; “ for if it be only a debt, my dear,” turning to her husband, “ you can soon settle that.”

“ I wish it may be in my power,” answered he, sighing deeply.

“ You

“ You *wish* ! Can there be a doubt of its being in your power ? ” cried Mrs. Mourtray. — “ Oh, my poor Henry, what will become of you ! ” and she burst into tears.

Mourtray tried to calm her agitation, entreating her to call to her aid sufficient fortitude, to be prepared to encounter whatever evils they had yet to learn : while Emma, hanging over her, and holding her hands in her’s, tenderly conjured her to compose herself. —

“ Let us, my dear Mamma,” said she, “ trust that all will soon be well ; and, in the mean time, find comfort in knowing, that Henry is safe under Sydney’s care and protection. I am sure I shall ever love that good man, for his behaviour on this occasion.”

Mrs. Mourtray, without noticing Emma’s commendation of Sydney, continued

tinued weeping; and every now and then asserted, that her son, however unfortunate he might be, could not have been much to blame.

But Mourtray, who thought otherwise, and who had formed his own opinion of the circumstance to which Sydney alluded in his letter, said, he greatly feared Henry had been drawn into his present distress by some ungovernable passion.

“Poor, dear boy!” exclaimed Mrs. Mourtray: “how can you be so unkind to suppose this?—But you are always blaming him; though, Heaven knows, his only fault is a little too much spirit.”

Mourtray would not say any thing to add to her vexation, but he keenly felt, that her fatal blindness to his faults, and her never suffering him, from a child, (when she could help it) to be contra-

dicted,

dicted, had done her son irreparable mischief.

The ladies at length yielded to Mourtray's persuasions, to retire to rest, after he had in vain employed them for some time.—Too much disturbed himself to think of repose, he remained some hours buried in thought, whilst his wife forgot her cares and anxieties in sleep.

In the midst of his unpleasant meditations, he was suddenly interrupted by Peter's announcing an officer, who said, he must speak with him that instant:—Mourtray, hoping this visit would at least clear his perplexities, desired he might be admitted; when the stranger, hastily apologizing for his intrusion, eagerly enquired, if his son was in the house?

Mourtray assured him he was not; and the stranger, after saying, that he was very glad to hear it, added, that his only
 motive

motive for asking the question, was, to bid him hasten away as fast as possible, and conceal himself carefully.

Poor Mourtray, with a tremulous voice, had just begun to demand an explanation of the unfortunate business in which his son was involved, when he was again disturbed by a new alarm; for a violent thundering at the door was heard, which made him hasten into the hall; and, to his great horror, a constable and two other persons rushed into the house, with a search-warrant, which they produced; and, at that instant, the officer, who did not wish to be seen, slipped away.

The constable and his followers then, in an authoritative tone, enquired after Mr. Henry Mourtray, and insisted on searching the house for him, which the wretched father dared not oppose, as the charge they had against his son was of the most serious nature; and he knew
too

too well that every man's house was safe against such intruders, excepting when an accusation was lodged against a person for crimes that authorized their visit. To save his wife and daughter the shock of this, all that Mourtray could now do, was to make them rise instantly, under pretence of feeling himself ill, and to shut himself up with them in his study; while Henry's pursuers satisfied themselves, that the object of their search was no where in the house; after which they departed, and Mourtray and his family threw themselves on their beds.

END OF VOL. II.

It was not every man's house was this
 against their interests, excepting when
 an accusation was lodged against a man
 for a crime that was not his; and
 to see his wife and daughter the flock
 of the all that poverty could now do,
 was to make them the only, and so
 precious of being himself ill, and so
 that his own spirit was in his body;
 with his own's presence, and of them-
 selves, and of their own, and of their
 no where in the house; and so, and so
 separated, and separated, and his family
 they themselves on their beds.